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POEMS · OF · PLACES

EDITED BY
HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

AFRICA

HOUGHTON, OSBORN & CO.

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POEMS OF PLACES.

EDITED BY

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW.

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POEMS OF PLACES

EDITED BY

HENRY W. LONGFELLOW

It is the Soul that sees; the outward eyes
Present the object, but the Mind descries.

CRABBE.

AFRICA.



BOSTON!

HOUGHTON, OSGOOD AND COMPANY.

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AFRICA.

INTRODUCTORY.

AFRICA.

YE zones, so strange and wondrous,
Thou distant magic land,
Where swarthy men are roving
Burnt by the sun's fierce brand;
Where all things glow and sparkle,
Where Phœbus' golden beam
The genuine gold doth darken
That flashes bright in every stream.

Thy forests dark and deserts
Are present to my view,
Thy feathery palms are mirrored
In lakes of deepest blue;
The wild beasts' roar is sounding
From cleft and cavern black,
With heavy bales and costly
The Arab loads his camel's back.

There, too, the curly negro
Gold-dust in rivers seeks,
And there Mount Atlas gravely
Rears heaven-supporting peaks;
The sunlight tinges brightly
Its crags with radiant blush,
While elephants gray and sombre
With ponderous step the meadows crush.

To dip his mane in the river
The lion stoopeth down,
And swiftly as the lightning
Canoes dart, light and brown;
They pass o'er depths securely,
And dates and rosin bear,
And from the waves dark faces
All dripping and all wet appear.

O zone! So hot and glowing,
Queen of the earth art thou!
Sand is thy mantle flowing,
The sun doth crown thy brow:
Of gold, thou queenly woman,
Are all the clasps and rims,
That fasten with fiery splendor
The garment to thy burning limbs.

The strand, with rocks and quicksands,
Naked and parched with heat,
Cut into shapes fantastic,
Is a footstool for thy feet;

The ocean far beneath it
Its edge doth hem and braid,
Washing thy sandals, foaming,
As an anxious and a willing maid.

On dazzling mats of scarlet
Thou liest thoughtful and calm,
The spotted panthers are licking
The fingers of thy left palm;
While skilfully thy right hand,
Sparkling with jewels rare,
Into a tress is twisting
The lion's mane of tawny hair,

And then again, untwining it,
Into a five-toothed prong,
Dost comb the hair's dense tresses
His curv'd back along:
His flanks are proudly heaving;—
Anon, with the same hand
Commandingly thou searest
The slim giraffes across the sand.

Upon thy shoulder sitting
In his plumage' bright display,
With chattering and with screaming
Perches a parrot gay;
He lays his beak so crooked
Against thy listening ear,
With voice both loud and ringing
Relates he stories strange to hear.

A silken turban, broidered
With flowers, decks thy hair,
A rich and costly necklace,
Such as sultanas wear,
Of thousand links close-knitted
To chain compact and sound,
With golden coil encircles
Thy neck which sun and heat have browned.

Who is there, that has seen thee
In all thy splendor quite?
Dense forests ever screen thee,
Waving with leafy night
Before thy golden crescent,
Before thy cheek's rich bloom,
Before thy lips of ruby,
Before thine eye which flashes gloom.

None, none have yet beheld thee,
O Queen, from face to face,
Although full many a suitor
Advanced with fearless pace
To lift the veil that covers
Thy brow with mystic fold, —
Ah, with his life atoned he
The attempt he ventured all too bold!

From off thy throne thou rosest
With menace dread to see, —
“Arouse ye, O my lions,
Tear him, and fight for me;

O sun ! thy living fire
From cloudless tent on high
Hurl down on the offender
With scorching ardor, hot and dry !

“Subdue his strength, ye vapors,
With sultry poisonous breath,
And let at every palm-tree
A javelin threaten death ;
Ye curly-headed negroes,
Haste, bring to me his blood,
Let fly your hissing arrows,
And take an aim full sure and good !”

Then up doth bound the lion,
Roaring with fierce delight,
And strikes his paw unwieldy
In the breast of the hapless white ;
From every bush a warrior
With hideous grin doth leap,
And with its breath of poison
Simoom the desert plain doth sweep.

His spur the Jolof presses
Deep in his charger's side ;
How can the fainting pale-face
Such rage as this abide ?
All gashed and gory, sinking
A corpse upon the sand,
He cruelly hath perished,
O dread Sultana, through thy hand !

Thee, whom he fain desired
To disclose to every eye,
And who didst therefore bear him
Displeasure kindled high ;
Thee, in thy sanctuary,
He would have glorified,
Wherefore didst thou deter him
To publish thine own fame and pride ?

The negro-kings who saw thee
Thirst for the white man's blood,
Now offer it unto thee
In humble suppliant mood ;
The golden bowl doth brandish,
Flashing in blood-red sheen,
That many a drop of crimson
Is sprinkled on thy veil of green.

Thy swelling lips thou pressest
Against the vessel's rim,
On the yellow sand thou gazest
With savage smile and grim ;
The corpse before thee is lying,
Fiercely the sun doth sting ;
Through ages and through nations
Thy murdered suitors' fame shall ring !

Ferdinand Freiligrath. Tr. K. F. Kroeker.

UNDER THE PALM-TREES.

MANES are fluttering through the bushes; deadly
strife is in the wood:

Hear'st thou not the roar and stamping from yon palm-
grove's neighborhood?

Climb with me upon the teak-tree! Gently, lest thy
quiver's rattle

Should disturb them! Look, the tiger and the leopard
meet in battle!

For the body of the white man, whom the tiger did
surprise

Sleeping mid the crimson flowers on this slope of many
dyes, —

For the stranger, three moons nearly our tent's guest,
us oft inviting

With him plants to seek and chafers, — the pied mon-
sters now are fighting.

Woe! no arrow more can save him! Closed already
is his eye!

Red his temples as the blossoms of the thistle waving
nigh;

As within a bloody basin, where the mound is slightly
dinted,

Lies he; and his cheek is deeply with the tiger's claw
imprinted.

Woe, white man ! on thee thy mother nevermore shall
glad her eyes ! —

Foaming at the mouth, the leopard on the raging tiger
flies ;

But his left paw he reposes on the body to be rended,
And the right one, high uplifted, threatening to the foe
is wended.

What a bound ! Look, look, the leaper grips the dead
man by the arm !

But the other holds his booty ; dragging it he flies from
harm.

On their hind legs fight they ; wildly each upon the
other gazing,

As they rear, the livid body stark upright between
them raising.

Then, — O look ! above them something gliding from
the branches hangs,

Greenly shining, jaws all open, poisonous slime upon
its fangs !

Giant serpent ! thou the booty leav'st to neither forest-
ranger !

Thou entwinest, thou dost crush them, — tiger, leopard,
and pale stranger !

Ferdinand Freiligrath. Tr. C. Boner.

AFRICA.

WHERE the stupendous Mountains of the Moon
Cast their broad shadows o'er the realms of noon
From rude Caffraria, where the giraffes browse
With stately heads among the forest boughs,
To Atlas, where Numidian lions glow
With torrid fire beneath eternal snow;
From Nubian hills, that hail the dawning day,
To Guinea's coast, where evening fades away;
Regions immense, unsearchable, unknown,
Bask in the splendor of the solar zone, —
A world of wonders, where creation seems
No more the works of Nature, but her dreams.
Great, wild, and beautiful, beyond control,
She reigns in all the freedom of her soul;
Where none can check her bounty when she showers
O'er the gay wilderness her fruits and flowers;
None brave her fury when, with whirlwind breath
And earthquake step, she walks abroad with death.
O'er boundless plains she holds her fiery flight,
In terrible magnificence of light;
At blazing noon pursues the evening breeze,
Through the dun gloom of realm-o'ershadowing trees:
Her thirst at Nile's mysterious fountain quells,
Or bathes in secrecy where Niger swells
An inland ocean, on whose jasper rocks
With shells and sea-flower wreaths she binds her locks.
She sleeps on isles of velvet verdure, placed

Midst sandy gulfs and shoals forever waste;
She guides her countless flocks to cherished rills,
And feeds her cattle on a thousand hills:
Her steps the wild bees welcome through the vale,
From every blossom that embalms the gale;
The slow unwieldy river-horse she leads
Through the deep waters, o'er the pasturing meads;
And climbs the mountains that invade the sky,
To soothe the eagle's nestlings when they cry.
At sunset, when voracious monsters burst
From dreams of blood, awaked by maddening thirst;
When the lorn caves, in which they shrunk from light,
Ring with wild echoes through the hideous night;
When darkness seems alive, and all the air
In one tremendous uproar of despair,
Horror, and agony; — on her they call;
She hears their clamor, she provides for all,
Leads the light leopard on his eager way,
And goads the gaunt hyena to his prey.

James Montgomery.

AFRICA.

IS not the negro blest? His generous soil
With harvest-plenty crowns his simple toil;
More than his wants his flocks and fields afford:
He loves to greet the stranger at his board:
“The winds were roaring, and the white man fled,
The rains of night descended on his head;
The poor white man sat down beneath our tree,
Weary and faint, and far from home was he:

For him no mother fills with milk the bowl,
No wife prepares the bread to cheer his soul; —
Pity the poor white man who sought our tree,
No wife, no mother, and no home, has he.”
Thus sang the negro’s daughters; once again,
O that the poor white man might hear that strain!
Whether the victim of the treacherous Moor,
Or from the negro’s hospitable door
Spurned as a spy from Europe’s hateful clime,
And left to perish for thy country’s crime;
Or destined still, when all thy wanderings cease,
On Albion’s lovely lap to rest in peace;
Pilgrim! in heaven or earth, where’er thou be,
Angels of mercy guide and comfort thee!

James Montgomery.

THE SLAVE SHIP.

O’ER Africa the morning broke,
And many a negro-land revealed,
From Europe’s eye and Europe’s yoke,
In nature’s inmost heart concealed:
Here rolled the Nile his glittering train,
From Ethiopia to the main;
And Niger here uncoiled his length,
That hides his fountain and his strength,
Among the realms of noon;
Casting away their robes of night,
Forth stood in nakedness of light
The Mountains of the Moon.

Hushed were the howlings of the wild,
The leopard in his den lay prone;
Man, while creation round him smiled,
Was sad or savage, man alone;—
Down in the dungeons of Algiers
The Christian captive woke in tears;
Caffraria's lean marauding race
Prowled forth on pillage or the chase;
In Libyan solitude,
The Arabian horseman scoured along;
The caravan's obstreperous throng
Their dusty march pursued.

But woe grew frantic in the west;
A wily rover of the tide
Had marked the hour of Afric's rest
To snatch her children from her side:
At early dawn, to prospering gales,
The eager seamen stretch their sails;
The anchor rises from its sleep
Beneath the rocking of the deep;
Impatient from the shore
A vessel steals;—she steals away
Mute as the lion with his prey,—
A human prey she bore.

Curst was her trade and contraband;
Therefore that keel, by guilty stealth,
Fled with the darkness from the strand,
Laden with living bales of wealth:
Fair to the eye her streamers played

With undulating light and shade ;
White from her prow the gurgling foam
Flew backward towards the negro's home,
 Like his unheeded sighs ;
Sooner that melting foam shall reach
His inland home, than yonder beach
 Again salute his eyes.

Tongue hath not language to unfold
 The secrets of the space between
That vessel's flanks, — whose dungeon-hold
 Hides what the sun hath never seen ;
Three hundred writhing prisoners there
Breathe one mephitic blast of air
From lip to lip ; like flame suppress,
It bursts from every tortured breast,
 With dreary groans and strong ;
Locked side to side, they feel by starts
The beating of each other's hearts, —
 Their breaking, too, ere long.

Light over the untroubled sea,
 Fancy might deem that vessel held
Her voyage to eternity,
 By one unchanging breeze impelled ; —
Eternity is in the sky,
Whose span of distance mocks the eye ;
Eternity upon the main,
The horizon there is sought in vain ;
 Eternity below
Appears in heaven's inverted face ;

And on, through everlasting space,
The unbounded billows flow.

Yet, while his wandering bark careered,
The master knew, with stern delight,
That full for port her helm was steered,
With aim unerring, day and night.
Pirate! that port thou ne'er shalt hail;
Thine eye in search of it shall fail:
But, lo! thy slaves expire beneath;
Haste, bring the wretches forth to breathe;
Brought forth, — away they spring,
And headlong in the whelming tide,
Rescued from thee, their sorrows hide
Beneath the haleyon's wing.

James Montgomery.

THE AFRICAN CHIEF.

CHAINED in the market-place he stood,
A man of giant frame,
Amid the gathering multitude
That shrunk to hear his name, —
All stern of look and strong of limb,
His dark eye on the ground;
And silently they gazed on him,
As on a lion bound.

Vainly, but well, that chief had fought,
He was a captive now;

Yet pride, that fortune humbles not,
Was written on his brow.
The scars his dark broad bosom wore
Showed warrior true and brave;
A prince among his tribe before,
He could not be a slave.

Then to his conqueror he spake:
"My brother is a king;
Undo this necklace from my neck,
And take this bracelet ring,
And send me where my brother reigns,
And I will fill thy hands
With store of ivory from the plains,
And gold-dust from the sands."

"Not for thy ivory nor thy gold
Will I unbind thy chain;
That bloody hand shall never hold
The battle-spear again.
A price thy nation never gave
Shall yet be paid for thee;
For thou shalt be the Christian's slave,
In lands beyond the sea."

Then wept the warrior chief, and bade
To shred his locks away;
And, one by one, each heavy braid
Before the victor lay.
Thick were the platted locks, and long,
And closely hidden there

Shone many a wedge of gold among
The dark and crispéd hair.

“Look, feast thy greedy eye with gold
Long kept for sorest need;
Take it, — thou askest sums untold,
And say that I am freed.
Take it, — my wife, the long, long day,
Weeps by the cocoa tree,
And my young children leave their play,
And ask in vain for me.”

“I take thy gold, — but I have made
Thy fetters fast and strong,
And ween that by the cocoa shade
Thy wife will wait thee long.”
Strong was the agony that shook
The captive’s frame to hear,
And the proud meaning of his look
Was changed to mortal fear.

His heart was broken — crazed his brain:
At once his eye grew wild;
He struggled fiercely with his chain,
Whispered, and wept, and smiled;
Yet wore not long those fatal bands,
And once, at shut of day,
They drew him forth upon the sands,
The foul hyena’s prey.

William Cullen Bryant.

AFRICA.

SHE sat where the level sands
Sent back the sky's fierce glare;
She folded her mighty hands,
And waited with calm despair,
While the red sun dropped down the streaming air.

Her throne was broad and low,
Built of cinnamon;
Huge ivory, row on row,
Varying its columns dun,
Barred with the copper of the setting sun.

Up from the river came
The low and sullen roar
Of lions, with eyes of flame,
That haunted its reedy shore,
And the neigh of the hippopotamus,
Trampling the watery floor.

Her great dusk face no light
From the sunset-glow could take;
Dark as the primal night
Ere over the earth God spake:
It seemed for her a dawn could never break.

She opened her massy lips,
And sighed with a dreary sound,
As when by the sand's eclipse

Bewildered men are bound,
And like a train of mourners
The columned winds sweep round.

She said: "My toreh at fount of day
I lit, now smouldering in decay:
Through futures vast I grope my way.

"I was sole queen the broad earth through:
My children round my knees upgrew,
And from my breast sucked Wisdom's dew.

"Day after day to them I hymned;
Fresh knowledge still my song o'erbrimmed,
Fresh knowledge, which no time had dimmed.

"I sang of Numbers; soon they knew
The spell they wrought, and on the blue
Foretold the stars in order due;—

"Of Music; and they fain would rear
Something to tell its influence clear;
Uprose my Memnon, with nice ear,

"To wait upon the morning air,
Until the sun rose from his lair
Swifter, at greet of lutings rare.

"I sang of Forces whose great bands
Could knit together feeble hands
To uprear Thought's supreme commands:

“Then, like broad tents, beside the Nile
They pitched the Pyramids’ great pile;
Where light and shade divided smile;

“And on white walls, in stately show,
Did Painting with fair movement go,
Leading the long processions slow.

“All laws that wondrous Nature taught,
To serve my children’s skill I brought,
And still for fresh devices sought.

“What need to tell? they lapsed away,
Their great light quenched in twilight gray,
Within their winding tombs they lay,

“And centuries went slowly by,
And looked into my sleepless eye,
Which only turned to see them die.

“The winds like mighty spirits came,
Alive and pure and strong as flame,
At last to lift me from my shame;

“For oft I heard them onward go,
Felt in the air their great wings row,
As down they dipped in journeying slow.

“Their course they steered above my head.
One strong voice to another said, —
‘Why sits she here so drear and dead?’

“ ‘Her kingdom stretches far away;
Beyond the utmost verge of day,
Her myriad children dance and play.’

“Then throbbed my mother’s heart again,
Then knew my pulses finer pain,
Which wrought like fire within my brain.

“I sought my young barbarians, where
A mellower light broods on the air,
And heavier blooms swing incense rare.

“Swart-skinned, crisp-haired, they did not shun
The burning arrows of the sun;
Erect as palms stood every one.

“I said, — These shall live out their day
In song and dance and endless play;
The children of the world are they.

“Nor need they delve with heavy spade;
Their bread, on emerald dishes laid,
Sets forth a banquet in each shade.

“Only the thoughtful bees shall store
Their honey for them evermore;
They shall not learn such toilsome lore;

“Their finest skill shall be to snare
The birds that flaunt along the air,
And deck them in their feathers rare.

“So centuries went on their way,
And brought fresh generations gay
On my savannas green to play.

“There came a change. They took my free,
My careless ones, and the great sea
Blew back their endless sighs to me :

“With earthquake shudderings oft the mould
Would gape ; I saw keen spears of gold
Thrusting red hearts down, not yet cold,

“But throbbing wildly ; dreadful groans
Stole upward through Earth’s ribbed stones,
And crept along through all my zones.

“I sought again my desert bare,
But still they followed on the air,
And still I hear them everywhere.

“So sit I dreary, desolate,
Till the slow-moving hand of Fate
Shall lift me from my sunken state.”

Her great lips closed upon her moan ;
Silently sate she on her throne,
Rigid and black, as carved in stone.

Maria Lowell.

THE SLAVE'S DREAM.

BESIDE the ungathered rice he lay,
His sickle in his hand;
His breast was bare, his matted hair
Was buried in the sand.
Again, in the mist and shadow of sleep,
He saw his native land.

Wide through the landscape of his dreams
The lordly Niger flowed;
Beneath the palm-trees on the plain
Once more a king he strode;
And heard the tinkling caravans
Descend the mountain-road.

He saw once more his dark-eyed queen
Among her children stand;
They clasped his neck, they kissed his cheeks,
They held him by the hand!—
A tear burst from the sleeper's lids
And fell into the sand.

And then at furious speed he rode
Along the Niger's bank;
His bridle-reins were golden chains,
And, with a martial clank,
At each leap he could feel his scabbard of steel
Smiting his stallion's flank.

Before him, like a blood-red flag,
The bright flamingoes flew;
From morn till night he followed their flight,
O'er plains where the tamarind grew,
Till he saw the roofs of Caffre huts,
And the ocean rose to view.

At night he heard the lion roar,
And the hyena scream,
And the river-horse, as he crushed the reeds,
Beside some hidden stream,
And it passed, like a glorious roll of drums,
Through the triumph of his dream.

The forests, with their myriad tongues,
Shouted of liberty;
And the Blast of the Desert cried aloud,
With a voice so wild and free,
That he started in his sleep and smiled
At their tempestuous glee.

He did not feel the driver's whip,
Nor the burning heat of day;
For Death had illumined the Land of Sleep,
And his lifeless body lay
A worn-out fetter, that the soul
Had broken and thrown away!

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.

IN AFRICA.

A SLAVE, and old, within her veins
There runs that warm, forbidden blood
That no man dares to dignify
In elevated song. The chains
That held her race but yesterday
Hold still the hands of men. Forbid
Is Ethiop. The turbid flood
Of prejudice lies stagnant still,
And all the world is tainted. Will
And wit lie broken as a lance
Against the brazen mailed face
Of old opinion.

None advance
Steel-clad and glad to the attack,
With trumpet and with song. Look back!
Beneath yon pyramids lie hid
The histories of her great race.
Old Nilus rolls right sullen by,
With all his secrets.

Who shall say:
My father reared a pyramid;
My brother clipped the dragon's wings;
My mother was Semiramis?
Yea, harps strike idly out of place;
Men sing of savage Saxon kings
New-born and known but yesterday.

Nay, ye who boast ancestral name
And vaunt deeds dignified by time
Must not despise her. Who hath worn,
Since time began, a face that is
So all-enduring, old like this, —
A face like Africa's?

Behold!

The Sphinx is Africa. The bond
Of silence is upon her. Old
And white with tombs, and rent and shorn
And trampled on, yet all untamed;
All naked now, yet not ashamed, —
The mistress of the young world's prime
Sleeps satisfied upon her fame.
Beyond the Sphinx, and still beyond,
Beyond the tawny desert-tomb
Of Time, beyond tradition, loom
And lift ghostlike from out the gloom
Her thousand cities, battle-torn
And gray with story and with time.

She points a hand and cries: "Go read
The granite obelisks that lord
Old Rome, and know my name and deed.
My archives these, and plundered when
I had grown weary of all men."
We turn to these; we cry: "Abhorred
Old Sphinx, behold! we cannot read!"

Joaquin Miller.



THE BARBARY STATES.

Algiers.

ODE ON THE BATTLE OF ALGIERS.

ONE day of dreadful occupation more,
Ere England's gallant ships
Shall, of their beauty, pomp, and power disrobed,
Like sea-birds on the sunny main,
Rock idly in the port.

One day of dreadful occupation more !
A work of righteousness,
Yea, of sublimest mercy, must be done :
England will break the oppressor's chain,
And set the captives free.

Red Cross of England, which all shores have seen
Triumphantly displayed,
Thou sacred banner of the glorious Isle,
Known wheresoever keel hath cut
The navigable deep, —

Ne'er didst thou float more proudly o'er the storm
Of havoc and of death,
Than when, resisting fiercely, but in vain,
Algiers her moony standard lowered,
And signed the conqueror's law.

Oh, if the grave were sentient, as these Moors
In erring credence hold;
And if the victims of captivity
Could in the silent tomb have heard
The thunder of the fight, —

Sure their rejoicing dust upon that day
Had heaved the oppressive soil,
And earth been shaken like the mosques and towers,
When England on those guilty walls
Her fiery vengeance sent.

Seldom hath victory given a joy like this, —
When the delivered slave
Revisits once again his own dear home,
And tells of all his sufferings past,
And blesses Exmouth's name.

Far, far and wide along the Italian shores,
That holy joy extends;
Sardinian mothers pay their vows fulfilled;
And hymns are heard beside thy banks,
O Fountain Arethuse!

Churches shall blaze with lights and ring with praise,
And deeper strains shall rise

From many an overflowing heart to Heaven;
 Nor will they in their prayers forget
 The hand that set them free.

Robert Southey.

UNDER THE OLIVES.

"THE Sahel of Algiers is the range of hills lying between the sea and the Atlas Mountains. They are of an average elevation of 600 feet, but occasionally attain much greater height. This belt of hills is exceedingly rich and fertile in vegetation, and is cut by numerous deep ravines whose sides are clothed with large olive-trees, with ilex, lentisk, aloes, cactuses, and a profuse undergrowth of shrubs and wild-flowers. In some places a narrow plain intervenes between the hills and the sea, but at the town itself this plain becomes a mere strip covered by the great square and two streets east and west, at the back of which the houses mount the hill abruptly, divided by steep narrow streets, which frequently break off into steps, and up which no vehicle can pass. On each side of the town the slopes are dotted with country-houses and lovely gardens. The Gardens of the Hesperides are placed by the poets somewhere at the foot of the Atlas Mountains, whose snowy summits can be seen from the Sahel of Algiers." — *Ballads and Songs*.

SEATED in a Moorish garden
 On the Sahel of Algiers,
 Wandering breezes brought the burden
 Of its history in past years.
 Lost amidst the mist of ages,
 Its first chronicles arise;
 Yonder is the chain of Atlas,
 And the pagan paradise!

Past these shores the wise Phœnicians
 Coasted outwards towards the west,
 Hoping there to find Atlantis,
 And the Islands of the Blest.

Somewhere in these mystic valleys
Grew the golden-fruited trees,
Which the wandering son of Zeus
Stole from the Hesperides.

Many monsters, famed in story,
Had their habitations here,
Scaly coats and tresses hoary
Struck adventurous souls with fear.
Not far off lived Polyphemus,
Glaring with his single eye;
Sailors wrecked upon these waters
Only gained their brink to die.

But if ever, while carousing,
Rescued travellers told their feats,—
How the elephants came browsing
From the inner desert-heats,
How the dragons and the griffins
Likewise howled along the shore,—
Those who listened bade their footsteps
Seek those dreadful realms no more!

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When the veil of History rises,
Carthage owns the glorious state,
Planted with the Arts of Commerce,
And the men who made her great.
Rivalled only by Etruria,
She was mistress of the main;
Still we have the solemn treaty,
Drawn in brass betwixt them twain.

One among her many daughters,
Iol at her altars prayed ;
Merchants, storm-struck on the waters,
Sought this harbor when afraid.
All this coast of ancient Afric
Bore her sway and owned her name ;
To her western port of Iol
Buyers flocked and sellers came.

Yearly swarming populations
Poured through Carthage' busy gates,
Bearing forth the seed of nations ;
And her ships bore living freights
Costlier far than pearl or coral, —
Hardy, brave, adventurous men !
As our exiles cling to England,
Sons of Carthage loved her then.

They, when working mines in Cornwall,
Gathering ivory near the Line,
Pressing grapes from vines of Cadiz,
Also thought her gods divine !
These blue peaks and golden valleys,
Those white waves of northern foam,
Also had their groups of eager,
Loving hearts, who called her "home."

But, "*Delenda est Carthago!*"

Was the threat proclaimed of yore, —
Searce a bird now flaps his pinion,
White-winged vessels dance no more.

Heaps of stone, o'ergrown with brambles,
Mutely eloquent, attest,
Men who once called Carthage mother,
Sleep forgotten on her breast.

Lo! a troop of white-robed Arabs,
Passing in a silent file,
Fix the eye which else would vainly
Range the plain from mile to mile.
Not a dwelling known to Carthage!
Not one temple on the hill!
Empty lie the land-locked harbors,
Margins bare, and waters still!

Empty graves, through which the hyena
Ranges, laughing at decay,
Strike their dark and dangerous labyrinth
Inward from the light of day.
And such utter desolation
Triumphs here, it may be said,
That of this forgotten nation
Even the graves give up their dead!

On which summit was the Byrsa
Scipio fought five days to gain?
Here is naught but what the footstep
In five minutes might attain.
Can it be that once a million
People dwelt upon this plain!

* * *

Such is Carthage, lying eastward
Ten days' journey from Algiers;

On the grassy slopes of Iol
Lie two thousand nameless years.
Dead her sailors, sunk her vessels,
Merchants seek her marts no more;
I have walked midst broken columns
Strewed about her sounding shore,

And I have retraced the story,
How across that bright blue sea,
Clove the sharp prows, keen for glory,
Straight from distant Italy,
Manned by warriors whose unbounded
Thirst for conquest nerved them well;
And the state by Dido founded
Vainly struggled, sadly fell.

Even as the walls of Veii
Fell beneath a Latin wile,
Carthage also lowered her sceptre
From the Atlantic to the Nile.
This was then called old Numidia,
Underneath the Roman sway;—
Ere through centuries dark with bloodshed
Rose the Crescent of the Dey.

Once these hills were crowned with villas,
Ripe with harvest all these plains;
Scarcely a trace of Roman splendor
Or Athenian art remains.
Little dreams the *colon d'Afrique*,
Roughly ploughing round his home,

These ravines midst which he labors
Once were "granaries of Rome."

From this harbor of Icosium
Passed the many-oared trireme,
Laden with colonial produce
Bound for Ostia's yellow stream.
Sacks of corn and oil of olives,
Strings of dates and jars of wine,
Such the tribute yearly rendered
Hence unto Mount Palatine.

Now, across that waste of waters,
Sailless is the lonely sea,
Not a vessel tracks the pathway,
Rome, betwixt Algiers and thee!
For the pulses of a people
With their rulers rise and fall,
And Numidia gives her harvest
To defray the tax of Gaul!

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What is that red cloud ascending,
Scarcely bigger than a hand,
From where sea and sky are blending,
Till it hovers o'er the land?
See! the mists are slowly dwining,
We shall see its brightness soon!
'T is no cloud with silver lining,
But the perfect crescent moon!

'T is the emblem of the Prophet
Hanging in a violet sky,

While amidst the cloudy olives
Breaks the jackal's evening cry.
Just as if to help my story,
Signs and sounds came into play,
Crescent of a fearful glory !
War-ery of a beast of prey !

Dark and dreadful is the legend
Of a thousand years of crime,
Since the writer of the Koran,
Flying, marked the flight of Time.
Since, from depths of far Arabia,
Rolled the fierce, resistless throng,
And the race was to the swift one,
And the battle to the strong.

As I sit within this garden,
All the air is soft and sweet ;
Endless length of famous waters
Roll to northward at my feet —
Waters where the pirate vessels,
Year by year and hour by hour,
Swept across a trembling ocean,
Seeking what they might devour !

Still in sunlight lies the city,
Here and there a palm-tree waves
Over Moorish mosque and rampart,
Over nameless Christian graves.
These fair clumps of winter roses
Once drank dew of bitter tears ;

Christian hearts grew sick with sunshine
On the Sahel of Algiers !

Yet how gallant is the poem
Of the triumph of the Cross !
How the ranks of instant martyrs
In the front filled up the loss !
How the slave died in the bagnio !
The crusader at his post !
And for each priest struck, another
Served the altar and the Host !

Hither came the good St. Vincent,
Brought a captive o'er the sea,
Slave unto a learned doctor
For two weary years was he ;
Next he served the gentle lady,
Wife to an apostate lord ;
But, behold, his prayers were fruitful,
And he brought them to accord !

In these prisons languished hundreds ; —
Oft the mystic sound of wails,
Wafted over leagues of ocean,
Wept and murmured past Marscilles.
In the chapels shook the tapers
As the spirit-wind passed by,
And the noblest swords in Europe
Leapt responsive to the cry.

When, at length, the Sails of Rescue
Loomed upon the northern wave,

All the voices of the martyrs
Welcome breathed from this their grave.
Past the town, and round the mountains,
See the stately fleet advance ; —
And the children of St. Louis
Plant the fleurs-de-lis of France !

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Seated in a Moorish garden
On the Sahel of Algiers,
I can hear a tender burden,
Like the music of the spheres.
Not from any mortal voices
Could that tender music come !
No ! It is a strain familiar —
'Tis the hymn we sing at home !

As it soars above the olives,
Drops below the pine-clad hills,
What a vast and tender memory
Mine imagination fills !
From the grave where She lay buried,
Fifteen hundred years are rolled,
And the church of St. Augustine
Steps regenerate as of old !

Hippo lies a shapeless ruin,
All her ramparts overthrown ;
Yet, wherever men are Christians,
Her great Bishop's name is known.
Over Hippo blow the breezes,
Sighing from the great blue sea ; —

Yet of all our living preachers
Who so powerful as he ?

Once, upon a Sabbath morning,
I at Bona heard the bells
In a chorus — as the water
Sharply ebbs and softly swells.
And to me it seemed the mountains
Echoed back a sweet refrain,
That the ruined church of Hippo
Harbored prayer and praise again !

When the bared, bowed head of Jerome
Fell before the flashing sword ; —
When both Marcellin and Cyril
To the last confessed the Lord ;
When St. Felix fell at Carthage,
Struck with clubs ; and in the flames
Saints Severian and Aquila
(Married lovers) knit their names

In a more immortal linking,
As twin martyrs for the faith ;
When St. Marcian at Cherchell
Faced the cruel teeth of death ; —
They did more than bear brave witness
To the glorious hearts of old ;
For they laid the strong foundation
Of the universal Fold.

In that great stone ring at Cherchell
Grass hath muffled all the ground ;

All the circling seats are empty,
Not a motion or a sound !
Pause ! O feet that here tread lightly !
Hush ! O voice discoursing here !
Spirits of the just made perfect
Doubtless often linger near !

What if in that calm arena
Where the sunbeams softly sleep,
You, with many an aching bosom,
Dared not cry and could not weep !
What if Marcian wore the features —
Dear blue eyes and soft brown hair, —
And you saw the savage creatures
Leap infuriate from their lair ?

* * *

Yet, O dreadful dream of Cherchell !
That was what was undergone
In that circle where the fruit-trees
Like a faint reflection shone.
Now for every martyr noted
In the list I read to-day,
Is a tender special mention
When Algerian Christians pray.

Down the hill I see the belfry
And the quaint old Moorish porch ;
Hark ! the little bell is swinging,
Calling willing feet to church.
Down the lane between the olives,
Then across the wide white road ;

Stranger, if your heart is heavy,
Take it to that hushed abode,

Where the lamp burns ever dimly
All throughout the sunny day,
But shines clear upon the arches
As the twilight fades away.
You will find the weight drop from you, —
Leave it there among the flowers,
Which beneath the Christian altar
Mark the change of Christian hours.

Quaint old court of True Believer,
All thy truth is overthrown!
Servants of another Master
Now have claimed thee for their own;
Built his altar, placed around it
Irises and asphodels; —
Where to-morrow some new glory
Will unfold its buds and bells.

Sitting in this golden stillness
All my thoughts turn back to them
Who in such an Eastern sunshine
Worshipped at Jerusalem!
Are they then a living presence,
After all these changing years?
Hark, how many bells are ringing
On the Sahel of Algiers!

Bessie Rayner Parkes.

THE ENCHANTED BATHS.

"THE *Hamman Meskouteen*, the Silent or Inchaned Baths, are situated on a low ground, surrounded with mountains. There are several fountains that furnish the water, which is of an intense heat, and fall afterwards into the Zenati." — SHAW'S *Travels in Barbary*.

THE sounds which last he heard at night
Awoke his recollection first at morn.
A scene of wonders lay before his eyes.
In mazy windings o'er the vale
A thousand streamlets strayed,
And in their endless course
Had intersected deep the stony soil,
With labyrinthine channels islanding
A thousand rocks, which seemed
Amid the multitudinous waters there
Like clouds that freckle o'er the summer sky,
The blue ethereal ocean circling each,
And insulating all.

Those islets of the living rock
Were of a thousand shapes,
And Nature with her various tints
Diversified anew their thousand forms;
For some were green with moss,
Some ruddier tinged, or gray, or silver-white,
And some with yellow lichens glowed like gold,
Some sparkled sparry radiance to the sun.
Here gushed the fountains up,
Alternate light and blackness, like the play

Of sunbeams on a warrior's burnished arms.
 Yonder the river rolled, whose ample bed,
 Their sportive lingerings o'er,
 Received and bore away the confluent rills.

This was a wild and wondrous scene,
 Strange and beautiful, as where
 By Oton-tala, like a sea of stars,
 The hundred sources of Hoangho burst.
 High mountains closed the vale,
 Bare rocky mountains, to all living things
 Inhospitable; on whose sides no herb
 Rooted, no insect fed, no bird awoke
 Their echoes, save the eagle, strong of wing,
 A lonely plunderer, that afar
 Sought in the vales his prey.

Robert Southey.



Atlas, the Mountain.

THE MOUNTAIN STREAMS.

AND down the streams which clove those mountains
 vast

Around their inland islets, and amid
 The panther-peopled forests, whose shade cast
 Darkness and odors, and a pleasure hid
 In melancholy gloom, the pinnace past;
 By many a star-surrounded pyramid

Of icy crag cleaving the purple sky,
And caverns yawning round unfathomably.

The silver noon into that winding dell,

With slanted gleam athwart the forest tops,
Tempered like golden evening, feebly fell;

A green and glowing light, like that which drops
From folded lilies in which glowworms dwell,

When earth over her face night's mantle wraps;
Between the severed mountains lay on high
Over the stream, a narrow rift of sky.

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And ever down the prone vale, like a cloud

Upon a stream of wind, the pinnace went:
Now lingering on the pools, in which abode

The calm and darkness of the deep content
In which they paused; now o'er the shallow road

Of white and dancing waters all besprent
With sands and polished pebbles: mortal boat
In such a shallow rapid could not float.

Percy Bysshe Shelley.

Carthage.

CARTHAGE.

THERE was an ancient city, Carthage, held
By Tyrian settlers, facing from afar
Italia, and the distant Tiber's mouth;
Rich in resources, fierce in war's pursuits:

And this one city, Juno, it was said,
Far more than every other land esteemed,
Samos itself being less. Here were her arms,
Her chariot here; e'en then the goddess strives
With earnest hope to found a kingdom here
Of universal sway, should fate permit.
But of a race derived from Trojan blood
She had heard, who would o'erturn the Tyrian towers
One day, and that a people of wide rule,
And proud in war, descended thence, would come
For Libya's doom. So did the Fates decree.

Virgil. Tr. C. P. Cranch.

CARTHAGE.

O DEGENERATE child of a kind compassionate
mother,
That to the might of Rome addest the cunning of
Tyre!
But this ruled by her power the earth which her valor
had conquered—
That instructed the world which by her prudence
she won.
Say, what doth history tell of thee? She tells, thou
didst ever
Win like the Roman by steel, rule like the Tyrian
by gold.

Friedrich von Schiller. Tr. J. H. Merivale.

MARIUS AMIDST THE RUINS OF CARTHAGE.

CARTHAGE, I love thee! thou hast run —
As I—a warlike race;

And now thy glory's radiant sun
Hath veiled in clouds his face:
Thy days of pride—as mine—depart;
Thy gods desert thee, and thou art

A thing as nobly base
As he whose sullen footstep falls
To-night around thy crumbling walls.

And Rome hath heaped her woes and pains

Alike on me and thee;
And thou dost sit in servile chains,—
But mine they shall not be!

Though fiercely o'er this aged head
The wrath of angry Jove is shed,

Marius shall still be free,—
Free in the pride that scorns his foe,
And bares the head to meet the blow.

I wear not yet thy slavery's vest,
As desolate I roam;
And though the sword were at my breast,

The torches in my home,
Still,—still, for orison and vow,
I'd fling them back my curse—as now;

I scorn, I hate thee,—Rome!
My voice is weak to word and threat,
My arm is strong to battle yet!

Winthrop Mackworth Praed.

MARIUS.

SUGGESTED BY A PAINTING BY VANDERLYN, OF MARIUS
SEATED AMONG THE RUINS OF CARTHAGE.

PILLARS are fallen at thy feet,
Fanes quiver in the air,
A prostrate city is thy seat,
And thou alone art there.

No change comes o'er thy noble brow,
Though ruin is around thee;
Thine eye-beam burns as proudly now,
As when the laurel crowned thee.

It cannot bend thy lofty soul,
Though friends and fame depart;
The car of fate may o'er thee roll,
Nor crush thy Roman heart.

And Genius hath electric power,
Which earth can never tame;
Bright suns may scorch, and dark clouds lower,
Its flash is still the same.

The dreams we loved in early life
May melt like mist away;
High thoughts may seem, mid passion's strife,
Like Carthage in decay.

And proud hopes in the human heart
May be to ruin hurled,

Like mouldering monuments of art
Heaped on a sleeping world.

Yet there is something will not die,
Where life hath once been fair ;
Some towering thoughts still rear on high,
Some Roman lingers there !

Lydia Maria Child.

CARTHAGE.

LOW it lieth, — earth to earth, —
All to which that earth gave birth :
Palace, market-street, and fane ;
Dust that never asks in vain,
Hath reclaimed its own again.
Dust, the wide world's king.

Where are now the glorious hours
Of a nation's gathered powers ?
Like the setting of a star,
In the fathomless afar ;
Time's eternal wing
Hath around those ruins cast
The dark presence of the past.

Mind, what art thou ? dost thou not
Hold the vast earth for thy lot ?
In thy toil, how glorious !
What dost thou achieve for us ?
Over all victorious
Godlike thou dost seem.

But the perishing still lurks
In thy most immortal works ;
Thou dost build thy home on sand,
And the palace-girdled strand

Fadeth like a dream.

Thy great victories only show
All is nothingness below.

Letitia Elizabeth Landon.

HANNIBAL'S OATH.

AND the night was dark and calm,
There was not a breath of air,
The leaves of the grove were still,
As the presence of death were there ;

Only a moaning sound
Came from the distant sea,
It was as if, like life,
It had no tranquillity.

A warrior and a child
Passed through the sacred wood,
Which, like a mystery,
Around the temple stood.

The warrior's brow was worn
With the weight of casque and plume ;
And sunburnt was his cheek,
And his eye and brow were gloom.

The child was young and fair,
But the forehead large and high,
And the dark eyes' flashing light
Seemed to feel their destiny.

They entered in to the temple,
And stood before the shrine,
It streamed with the victim's blood,
With incense and with wine.

The ground rocked beneath their feet,
The thunder shook the dome,
But the boy stood firm and swore
Eternal hate to Rome.

There 's a page in history
O'er which tears of blood were wept,
And that page is the record
How that oath of hate was kept.

Letitia Elizabeth Landon.

CARTHAGE.

AFTER A PICTURE BY LINTON.

IS it some vision of the elder day,
I Won from the Dead-Sea waters, by a spell
Like hers who waked the prophet?—or a dream
Of burning Egypt,—ere the Libyan sand
Had flung its pall above its perished world,—
Dreamt on its dreary grave, that has no flowers?

It is the eastern orphan's ocean-home !
The southern queen ! the city of the sea,
Ere Venice was a name ! the lofty heart
That battled for the empire of the world,
And all but won, — yet perished in the strife !
Now, in her young, proud beauty ; the blue waves,
Like vassals, bending low to kiss her feet,
Or dancing to their own sweet minstrelsy !
The olives hanging round her crested front,
Like laurel-crowns upon a victor's brow !
Beneath her palms, and mid her climbing bowers,
Darts, like a sunny flash, the antelope !
And bound the wild deer, where the severing boughs
Wave forth a goddess ! in her hunter-guise,
She wakes the perfumes of the Tyrian's groves,
To welcome from the waves her pilgrim boy,
And point his tangled pathway, to the towers
That to his homeless spirit speak of home !

Alas ! the stately city ! it is here,
Here, mid this palace pomp and leafy store,
(Bright as some landscape which the poet sees
Painted, by sunset, on a summer sky,
In hues the dolphin borrows when he dies !)
Mid all this clustering loveliness and life,
Where treads the Trojan, — that, in after years,
A lonelier exile and a loftier chief
Sat amid ruins !

Thomas Kibble Hervey.

CARTHAGE.

I STAND in Carthage; Dido's city here
Rose into power, and waved her wand of fear;
The seaman hailed her lofty towers afar,
Each gilded palace glittering like a star;
Armies obeyed her nod, a countless host,
And bee-like Commerce hummed along the coast;
Gems, gold, — all wealth within her walls was seen,
And tawny Afric bowed, and owned her queen.
City of Hannibal! who not in vain
Swore hate to Rome, and crossed the heaving main,
Climbed with his dauntless bands yon Alpine height,
And southward poured, an avalanche in his might,
While Rome confessed the terror of his name,
Drooped her bright eye, and hung her head in shame,
For those who sank by Thrasymerc's side,
And those whose blood the flowers of Cannæ dyed.
I stand in Carthage: What! no humble town,
No village left to speak her old renown?
Not e'en a tower, a wall? O ruthless years!
To spare not these to pride and pity's tears;
Well was avenging Scipio's task performed,
The flames announced it, and the towers he stormed;
But yours hath been far better, desert land,
Where scarce a palm-tree crowns the heaps of sand,
Old mouldering cisterns, rude unshapen stones, —
For e'en the graves are gone, and leave no bones, —
A half-choked stream, amid whose sedge is heard

The mournful cry of Afric's desert bird, —
These, Carthage, terror once of earth and sea,
Are all dark time hath left to tell of thee.

Nicholas Michell.



Derne.

THE STORMING OF DERNE.

THE storming of the city of Derne, in 1805, by General Eaton, at the head of nine Americans, forty Greeks, and a motley array of Turks and Arabs, was one of those feats of hardihood and daring which have in all ages attracted the admiration of the multitude. The higher and holier heroism of Christian self-denial and sacrifice, in the humble walks of private duty, is seldom so well appreciated.

NIGHT on the city of the Moor!
On mosque and tomb, and white-walled shore,
On sea-waves, to whose ceaseless knock
The narrow harbor-gates unlock,
On corsair's galley, carack tall,
And plundered Christian caraval!
The sounds of Moslem life are still;
No mule-bell tinkles down the hill;
Stretched in the broad court of the khan,
The dusty Bornou caravan
Lies heaped in slumber, beast and man.
The Sheik is dreaming in his tent,
His noisy Arab tongue o'erspent;
The kiosk's glimmering lights are gone,
The merchant with his wares withdrawn:

Rough pillowed on some pirate breast,
The dancing-girl has sunk to rest ;
And, save where measured footsteps fall
Along the Bashaw's guarded wall,
Or where, like some bad dream, the Jew
Creeps stealthily, his quarter through,
Or counts with fear his golden heaps,
The City of the Corsair sleeps !

But where yon prison long and low
Stands black against the pale star-glow,
Chafed by the ceaseless wash of waves,
There watch and pine the Christian slaves ;
Rough-bearded men, whose far-off wives
Wear out with grief their lonely lives ;
And youth, still flashing from his eyes
The clear blue of New England skies,
A treasured lock of whose soft hair
Now wakes some sorrowing mother's prayer ;
Or, worn upon some maiden breast,
Stirs with the loving heart's unrest !

A bitter cup each life must drain,
The groaning earth is cursed with pain,
And, like the scroll the angel bore,
The shuddering Hebrew seer before,
O'erwrit alike, without, within,
With all the woes which follow sin ;
But, bitterest of the ills beneath,
Whose load man totters down to death,
Is that which plucks the regal crown

Of Freedom from his forehead down,
And snatches from his powerless hand
The sceptred sign of self-command,
Effacing with the chain and rod
The image and the seal of God ;
Till from his nature, day by day,
The manly virtues fall away,
And leave him naked, blind and mute,
The godlike merging in the brute !

Why mourn the quiet ones who die
Beneath affection's tender eye,
Unto their household and their kin
Like ripened corn-sheaves gathered in ?
O weeper, from that tranquil sod,
That holy harvest-home of God,
Turn to the quick and suffering, — shed
Thy tears upon the living dead !
Thank God above thy dear ones' graves,
They sleep with Him, — they are not slaves.

What dark mass, down the mountain-sides
Swift-pouring, like a stream divides ?
A long, loose, straggling caravan,
Camel and horse and arméd man.
The moon's low crescent, glimmering o'er
Its grave of waters to the shore,
Lights up that mountain cavalcade,
And glints from gun and spear and blade
Near and more near ! — now o'er them falls
The shadow of the city walls.

Hark to the sentry's challenge, drowned
In the fierce trumpet's charging sound! —
The rush of men, the musket's peal,
The short, sharp clang of meeting steel!

Vain, Moslem, vain thy lifeblood poured
So freely on thy foeman's sword!
Not to the swift nor to the strong
The battles of the right belong;
For he who strikes for Freedom wears
The armor of the captive's prayers,
And Nature proffers to his cause
The strength of her eternal laws;
While he whose arm essays to bind,
And herd with common brutes his kind,
Strives evermore at fearful odds
With Nature and the jealous gods,
And dares the dread recoil which late
Or soon their right shall vindicate.

'T is done, — the hornéd crescent falls!
The star-flag flouts the broken walls!
Joy to the captive husband! joy
To thy sick heart, O brown-locked boy!
In sullen wrath the conquered Moor
Wide open flings your dungeon-door,
And leaves ye free from cell and chain,
The owners of yourselves again.
Dark as his allies desert-born,
Soiled with the battle's stain, and worn
With the long marches of his band

Through hottest wastes of rock and sand, —
Scorched by the sun and furnace-breath
Of the red desert's wind of death,
With welcome words and grasping hands,
The victor and deliverer stands !

The tale is one of distant skies ;
The dust of half a century lies
Upon it ; yet its hero's name
Still lingers on the lips of Fame.
Men speak the praise of him who gave
Deliverance to the Moorman's slave,
Yet dare to brand with shame and crime
The heroes of our land and time, —
The self-forgetful ones, who stake
Home, name, and life for Freedom's sake.
God mend his heart who cannot feel
The impulse of a holy zeal,
And sees not, with his sordid eyes,
The beauty of self-sacrifice !
Though in the sacred place he stands,
Uplifting consecrated hands,
Unworthy are his lips to tell
Of Jesus' martyr-miracle,
Or name aright that dread embrace
Of suffering for a fallen race !

John Greenleaf Whittier.

Utica.

CATO'S SOLILOQUY.

IT must be so, — Plato, thou reason'st well! —
Else whence this pleasing hope, this fond desire,
This longing after immortality?
Or whence this secret dread, and inward horror,
Of falling into naught? Why shrinks the soul
Back on herself, and startles at destruction?
'Tis the divinity that stirs within us;
'Tis heaven itself, that points out an hereafter,
And intimates eternity to man.
Eternity! thou pleasing, dreadful thought!
Through what variety of untried being,
Through what new scenes and changes must we pass!
The wide, the unbounded prospect lies before me;
But shadows, clouds, and darkness rest upon it.
Here will I hold. If there's a power above us
(And that there is all nature cries aloud
Through all her works), he must delight in virtue;
And that which he delights in must be happy.
But when! or where! — This world was made for
Cæsar.

I'm weary of conjectures. — This must end them.

(Laying his hand upon his sword.)

Thus am I doubly armed: my death and life,
My bane and antidote, are both before me:

This in a moment brings me to an end,
But this informs me I shall never die.
The soul, secured in her existence, smiles
At the drawn dagger, and defies its point.
The stars shall fade away, the sun himself
Grow dim with age, and nature sink in years;
But thou shalt flourish in immortal youth,
Unhurt amidst the war of elements,
The wreck of matter, and the crush of worlds.

Joseph Addison.



EGYPT, NUBIA, AND ABYSSINIA.

INTRODUCTORY.

EGYPT.

THUS spoke the Goddess of the fearless eye;
And at her voice renewed the Vision rose:

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“For Greece my sons of Egypt I forsook;
A boastful race, that in the vain abyss
Of fabling ages loved to lose their source,
And with their river traced it from the skies.
While there my laws alone despotic reigned,
And king, as well as people, proud obeyed;
I taught them science, virtue, wisdom, arts;
By poets, sages, legislators sought;
The school of polished life, and human-kind.
But when mysterious Superstition came,
And, with her Civil Sister leagued, involved
In studied darkness the desponding mind;
Then Tyrant Power the righteous scourge unloosed:
For yielded reason speaks the soul a slave.

Instead of useful works, like nature's, great,
Enormous, cruel wonders crushed the land;
And round a tyrant's tomb, who none deserved,
For one vile carcass perished countless lives.
Then the great Dragon, couched amid his floods,
Swelled his fierce heart, and cried, "This flood is mine,
'Tis I that bid it flow." But, undeceived,
His frenzy soon the proud blasphemer felt;
Felt that, without my fertilizing power,
Suns lost their force, and Niles o'erflowed in vain."

James Thomson.

EGYPT.

HAIL! Egypt! land of ancient pomp and pride,
Where Beauty walks by hoary Ruin's side;
Where Plenty reigns, and still the seasons smile,
And rolls — rich gift of God! — exhaustless Nile.
Land of the pyramid and temple lone!
Whose fame, a star, on earth's dark midnight shone;
Bright seat of wisdom, graced with arts and arms,
Ere Rome was built, or smiled fair Athens' charms;
What owes the past, the living world to thee?
All that refines, sublimes humanity.
The tall papyrus whispering seems to say,
Here rose the letters Cadmus bore away.
The Greek to thee his Jove and Bacchus owes,
With many a tale that charms, and thought that glows.
In thy famed schools the Samian learnt his lore,
That souls, though wandering, live forevermore;
The giant structures piled on Gizeh's plain
Speak of the sages watching heaven's bright train,

Who first years, months divided, traced afar
The comet's course, and named each glittering star.

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Worshipped of old, whence flows the Nile's proud wave?
From what far spring, green vale, or sunless cave?
Vainly its fountains curious pilgrims seek;
The solveless mystery ages fail to break.
Sure on the spring some god hath set his seal,
Sworn the bright waters never to reveal:
But if mid Ethiop wilds, or Lunar steeps,
Her secret charge the jealous Naiad keeps,
Sleeking her locks unseen in that bright well,
And planting flowers where only sylphs may dwell,
What boots it? bounding from his cradling-place,
Young Nile comes forth, to run his giant race,
Pours down Sennar, and washes Nubia's wild,
Fresh, full, and free, as when first Nature smiled;
Foams o'er the granite ridge by Souan's shore,
With flashing billow, and with sullen roar;
Still sees the temple crown his palmy banks,
And hoary Sphinxes sleep, in long-drawn ranks.
What though no more the priest on Isis calls,
Or grand processions sweep from Memphis' walls,
Praying the flood to rise o'er bower and field,
Still swell the waves, and wonted blessings yield;
And sweet the stream to traveller's thirsty lip,
As when the Egyptian deemed it heaven to sip;
And green the flags, and fair the lotus-flower,
As when that babe, within his bulrush-bower,
The embryo leader, Fame's immortal heir,
Smiled on the royal maids who found him there.

Nicholas Michell.

EGYPT.

FANTASTIC Sleep is busy with my eyes :
I seem in some waste solitude to stand
Once ruled of Cheops : upon either hand
A dark illimitable desert lies,
Sultry and still, — a realm of mysteries ;
A wide-browed Sphinx, half buried in the sand,
With orbless sockets stares across the land,
The woefulest thing beneath these brooding skies,
Where all is woeful, weird-lit vacancy.
'T is neither midnight, twilight, nor moonrise.
Lo ! while I gaze, beyond the vast sand-sea
The nebulous clouds are downward slowly drawn,
And one bleared star, faint-glimmring like a bee,
Is shut in the rosy outstretched hand of Dawn.

Thomas Bailey Aldrich.

EGYPT.

AND now the winds that southward blow,
And cool the hot Sicilian isle,
Bear me away. I see below
The long line of the Lybian Nile,
Flooding and feeding the parched lands
With annual ebb and overflow :
A fallen palm whose branches lie
Beneath the Abyssinian sky,
Whose roots are in Egyptian sands.

On either bank huge water-wheels,
Belted with jars and dripping weeds,
Send forth their melancholy moans,
As if, in their gray mantles hid,
Dead anchorites of the Thebaid
Knelt on the shore and told their beads,
Beating their breasts with loud appeals
And penitential tears and groans.

This city, walled and thickly set
With glittering mosque and minaret,
Is Cairo, in whose gay bazaars
The dreaming traveller first inhales
The perfume of Arabian gales,
And sees the fabulous earthen jars,
Huge as were those wherein the maid
Morgiana found the Forty Thieves
Coucealed in midnight ambushade ;
And seeing more than half believes
The fascinating tales that run
Through all the Thousand Nights and One,
Told by the fair Scheherczade.

More strange and wonderful than these
Are the Egyptian deities —
Ammon, and Emoth, and the grand
Osiris, holding in his hand
The lotus ; Isis, crowned and veiled ;
The sacred Ibis, and the Sphinx ;
Bracelets with blue-enamelled links ;
The Scarabee in emerald mailed,

Or spreading wide his funeral wings;
Lamps that perchance their night-watch kept
O'er Cleopatra while she slept,—
All plundered from the tombs of kings.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.

EGYPT.

TIS darkness all, with hateful silence joined —
Here drowsy bats enjoy a dull repose,
And marble coffins, vacant of their bones,
Show where the royal dead in ruin lay!
By every pyramid a temple rose
Where oft, in concert, those of ancient time
Sung to their goddess Isis hymns of praise;
But these are fallen! — their columns too superb
Are levelled with the dust, nor these alone —
Where is thy vocal statue, Memnon, now,
That once, responsive to the morning beams,
Harmoniously to Father Phœbus sung?
Where is thy image that in past time stood
High on the summit of yon pyramid? —
Still may you see its polished pedestal;
Where art thou, ancient Thebes? — all buried low,
All vanished! crumbled into mother dust,
And nothing of antiquity remains
But these huge pyramids and yonder hills.

Philip Freneau.

EGYPT.

A VISION of a River, and a Land
Where no rain falls, which is the river's bed,
Through which it flows from waters far away,
Great lakes, and springs unknown, increasing slow,
Till the midsummer currents, rushing red,
Come overflowing the banks day after day,
Like ocean billows that devour the strand,
Till, lo ! there is no land,
Save the cliffs of granite that enclose their flow,
And the waste sands beyond ; subsiding then
Till land comes up again, and the husbandmen
(Chanting hymns the while)
Sow their sure crops, which till midwinter be
Green, gladdening the old Nile
As he goes on his gracious journey to the Sea !
Land of strange gods, human, and beast, and bird,
Where animals were sacred and adored,
The great bull Apis being of these the chief ;
Pasth, with her woman's breast and lion face,
Maned, with her long arms stretching down her thighs ;
Dog-faced Anubis, haler of the dead
To judgment ; Nu, with the ram's head and curled
horns ;
And Athor, whom a templed crown adorns ;
And Mut, the vulture ; and the higher Three, —
The goddess-mother Isis, and her lord,
Divine Osiris, whom dark Typhon slew,

For whom, in her great grief
(Leading unfathered Horus, weeping too),
She wandered up and down, lamenting sore,
Searching for lost Osiris : Libya heard
Her lamentations, and her rainy eyes
Flooded the shuddering Nile from shore to shore,
Till she had found, in many a secret place,
The poor dismembered body (can it be
These are supreme Osiris ?) whereat she
Gathered the dear remains that Typhon hid,
And builded over each a Pyramid
In thirty cities, and was queen no more ;
For Horus governed in his father's stead,
The crowns of Earth and Heaven on his anointed
head !
From out the mists of hoar Antiquity
Straggle uncertain figures, gods or men —
Menes, Athothis, Cheops, and Khafren ;
No matter who these last were, what they did,
Save that each raised a monstrous Pyramid
To house his mummy, and they rise to-day
Rifled thereof ! And she —
Colossal Woman, couchant in the sands,
Who has a lion's body, paws for hands
(If she was wingéd, like the Theban one,
The wide-spread wings are gone) :
Nations have fallen round her, but she stands ;
Dynasties came and went, but she went not :
She saw the Pharaohs and the Shepherd Kings,
Chariots and horsemen in their dread array —
Cambyses, Alexander, Anthony,

The hosts of standards, and the eagle wings,
Whom, to her ruinous sorrow, Egypt drew :
 She saw, and she forgot —
Remembered not the old gods nor the new,
 Which were to her as though they had not been ;
Remembered not the opulent, great Queen,
 Whom riotous misbecomings so became —
 Temptress, whom none could tame,
Splendor and danger, fatal to beguile ;
Remembered not the serpent of old Nile,
Nor the Herculean Roman she loved and overthrew !
 Half buried in the sand it lies :
 It neither questions nor replies ;
 And what is coming, what is gone,
 Disturbs it not : it looks straight on,
 Under the everlasting skies,
 In what eternal Eyes !

Out of all this a Presence comes, and stands
 Full-fronted, as who turns upon the Past,
 Modern among the ancients, and the last
Of re-born, risen nations : in her hands,
 That once so many sceptres held, and rods,
A palm leaf set with jewels : Princess, she —
 She has her palaces along the Nile,
 Her navies on the sea ;
And in the temples of her fallen gods
(Not hers — she knows but the One God over all),
She hears from holy mosques the muezzin's call,
 “ Lo, Allah is most great ! ” And when the dawn
Is drawing near, “ Prayer better is than Sleep.”

She rides abroad ; her curtains are undrawn —
She walks with lifted veil, nor hides her smile,
Nor the sweet, luminous eyes, where languors creep
No more : she is no more Circassian girl,
But Princess, woman with the mother breast ;
No Cleopatra to dissolve the pearl
And take the asp — the East become the West !
Honor to Egypt — honor ;
May Allah smile upon her !

Richard Henry Stoddard.

A VISION OF OLD EGYPT.

METHOUGHT I floated on the ancient Nile
'Neath an abrupt and weird craggy pile,
Its flame-hued cliffs caverned with many a tomb,
Haunt of lone winds and birds of dusky plume.
A boat with monks that chanted floated nigh ;
But when they paused, some awful far reply
Came ever from the mountain's heart : one said,
"A voice from old-world priests of ages dead,
Who slumbering in their stupendous fane
Deep in yon mountain's heart are roused again
With a faint consciousness that stirs and dies
To breathe a note of hoary litanies,
Erewhile they chanted while impassive Death
Quenched ever some poor heart's weak flame of faith."
A tone it seemed bereft of life, unblest,
Emptied of thought and joy, vaguely opprest
A moment with the living voice of prayer
They have proved wasted on the lifeless air.

Embers of old hope wake to feel the doom
Of smothered souls in everlasting gloom.

Then changed the scene,—for it was dark around :
Methought I lay in silence drear profound
On some hot sand ; the close incumbent air
Recked faint as from some dismal creature's lair,
Some presence nigh of bird or beast obscene,
Hyena, bat, that loves to lurk unseen.
And yet a dubious glimmer near me lay
Upon the sand, and slow the space to gray
Opened about me till I dim defined
Columnar masses pale gigantic-lined
Rude, huge and lofty, with no capital
Or fretted moulding wrought fantastical,
Titanic blocks each horizontal laid
From pier to pier, bridging abysmal shade.
And lo ! I saw each giant pillar bulged
With form stupendous as of man, divulged,
Standing each speechless, vast along the stone,
Each to the full height of his pillar grown, —
A colonnade of these on either hand
My twilit nave ; afar they vague expand,
To my rapt vision dwindling infinite,
Phantoms assembling in the halls of Night !
And then I noted nigh a crevice small ;
Through this I deemed that Day into the Hall
Passed half in awe to melt the shroud of gloom
That broods o'er these in their eternal tomb.
These then in pauses of the living prayer
Wailed that antistrophe of Death's despair !

And still Night jealous claims them for her own,
Nor may her shadow free from them be thrown,
But silent like black water it abides
Forever resting down their mighty sides.
Their mummied forms are like their faces pale,
Each in vast crossing hands the crook and flail
Of an Osirian on his bosom broad
Holds folded close, each mitred like the god.

Their presence weighs upon the mortal sense,
Informs with fear the solitude intense,
Voiceless and moveless pale forever there,
In some unguessed unhuman-wise aware.
But calm serene is every countenance,
Unvexéd more of any human chance,
Sublime unearthly in its restfulness,
Quiet in destiny the passionless.
Fond fool! to dream that hopes or joys or woes
Of ours may ruffle this immense repose!
Can ever these have been of mortal race,
Crushing for pelf or fame with eager face,
Throbbing for pleasure, flushed elate with gain,
Sullen or blank with loss and lit again?
Yea, these were mortal, even as thyself,
And thou shalt be as they, O wildered elf!
Blown tossed like sere leaves, little comforted,
Thou shalt be tranquil calm as are the dead!
Even thy vain bubble-turmoil in the flood
Viewed from the still height very grand and good!

Kindred with twilight now my vision grows,
And straight between each pillared phantom shows

Sunk in the darkness a sarcophagus,
Heart of the darkness, solid, ponderous;
The massy lid of each, prodigious, shoved
Awry as though the dread inmate had moved.
Then I knew these were Pharaohs of the Sun,
Ramses-Sesostris, Amunoph-Memnon,
Sesortasen, and many a power beside,
Priest-kings imperial, who strode in pride
Over dwarfed continents astonished pale
Making the hearts of all the nations fail —
Then every breath bore rumors of their fame:
What are they now? the shadow of a name!

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'Tis noon, relentless rules the blaze
Of our Sun-god that ne'er a breeze allays.
Far, far away the windless river burning
Through wan sand-levels dimly banked
Of distant yellow hills, but nearer flanked
With palm-girt, loam-built thorps at every turning,
And oft a huge stone temple spread
With obelisk and sphinx and banner red;
Silent from heat our swarthy sailors towing
The boat becalmed with rope on land;
Anon some baked wave-minded mass at hand
From yon loam-ridge is loosened in their going,
Falling with sudden splash and thud,
Nor mars my soul's luxurious mood
Enhanced of distant water-wheels' long droning,
For dreamy listlessness akin
To hazy light the lulled world swooneth in.
I know the hind in midst of that intoning

Sits in the centre of the wheel
 While hemp-slung jars tilt ever and refill,
 A yoke of patient circling oxen guiding,
 Roofed from the scorching glare
 By large leaves of the melons trellised there.
 On yon low sandflat motionless abiding,
 Behold a crocodile, and nigh
 Upon the neighbor bank one may espy
 Some ibis white with pink flamingoes resting ;
 But when day waneth we shall hear
 Clangor of wild geese in the crystal clear,
 Their living chain wedgewise the glory breasting.
Roden Noel.

THE EGYPTIAN PRINCESS.

THERE was fear and desolation over swarthy Egypt's
 land,
 From the holy city of the sun to hot Syené's sand ;
 The sistrum and the cymbal slept, the merry dance no
 more
 Trampled the evening river-buds by Nile's embroidered
 shore,
 For the daughter of the king must die, the dark ma-
 gician said,
 Before the red sun sank to rest that day in ocean's bed.

 And all that day the temple-smoke loaded the heavy air,
 But they prayed to one who heedeth none, nor heareth
 earnest prayer.

That day the gonfalons were down, the silver lamps
untrimmed,
Sad at their oars the rowers sat, silent the Nile-boat
skinned,
And through the land there went a wail of bitterest
agony,
From the iron hills of Nubia to the islands of the sea.

There in that very hall where once her laugh had loudest
been,
Where but that morning she had worn the wreath of
Beauty's Queen,
She lay a lost and lovely thing—the wreath was on
her brow,
Alas! the lotus might not match its chilling paleness
now;
And ever as that golden light sank lower in the sky,
Her breath came fainter, and the beam seemed fading
in her eye.

Her coal-black hair was tangled, and the sigh of part-
ing day
Stirred tremblingly its silky folds as on her breast they
lay;
How heavily her rounded arm lay buried by her side!
How droopingly her lashes seemed those star-bright
eyes to hide!
And once there played upon her lips a smile like sum-
mer air,
As though Death came with gentle face, and she mocked
her idle fear.

Low o'er the dying maiden's form the king and father
bows,

Stern anguish holds the place of pride upon the monarch's brows.

"My daughter, in the world thou leav'st so dark without thy smile,

Hast thou one care a father's love, a king's word, may beguile, —

Hast thou one last bright wish, 't is thine, by Isis' throne on high,

If Egypt's blood can win it thee, or Egypt's treasure buy."

How anxiously he waits her words; upon the painted wall

In long gold lines the dying lights between the columns fall;

It lends her sinking limbs a glow, her pallid cheek a blush,

And on her lifted lashes throws a fitful, lingering flush,
And on her parting lips it plays: O, how they crowd to hear

The words that will be iron chains to bind them to her prayer.

"Father, dear father, it is hard to die so very young.
Summer was coming, and I thought to see the flowers sprung.

Must it be always dark like this? I cannot see thy face —

I am dying, hold me, father, in thy kind and close embrace;

O, let them sometimes bear me where the merry sun-
beams lie,
I know thou wilt, farewell, farewell! 't is easier now
to die!"

Small need of bearded leeches there; not all Arabia's
store
Of precious balm could purchase her one ray of sun-
light more;
Was it strange that tears were glistening where tears
should never be,
When Death had smitten down to dust the beautiful
and free?
Was it strange that warriors should raise a woman's
earnest cry
For help and hope to Heaven's throne, when such as
she must die?

And ever when the shining sun has brought the summer
round,
And the Nile rises fast and full along the thirsty ground,
They bear her from her silent home to where the gay
sunlight
May linger on the hollow eyes that once were starry
bright,
And strew sweet flowers upon her breast, while gray-
haired matrons tell
Of the high Egyptian maiden-queen that loved the light
so well.

Edwin Arnold.

THE SEVENTH PLAGUE OF EGYPT.

T WAS morn, — the rising splendor rolled
On marble towers and roofs of gold :
Hall, court, and gallery below,
Were crowded with a living flow :
Egyptian, Arab, Nubian there,
The bearers of the bow and spear,
The hoary priest, the Chaldee sage,
The slave, the gemmed and glittering page, —
Helm, turban, and tiara shone,
A dazzling ring, round Pharaoh's throne.

There came a man, — the human tide
Shrank backward from his stately stride :
His cheek with storm and time was tanned ;
A shepherd's staff was in his hand.
A shudder of instinctive fear
Told the dark king what step was near ;
On through the host the stranger came,
It parted round his form like flame.

He stooped not at the footstool stone,
He clasped not sandal, kissed not throne ;
Erect he stood amid the ring,
His only words, — “ Be just, O king ! ”
On Pharaoh's cheek the blood flushed high,
A fire was in his sullen eye ;
Yet on the chief of Israel

No arrow of his thousands fell:
All mute and moveless as the grave,
Stood chilled the satrap and the slave.

"Thou'rt come," at length the monarch spoke;
Haughty and high the words outbroke:
"Is Israel weary of its lair,
The forehead peeled, the shoulder bare?
Take back the answer to your band:
Go, reap the wind; go, plough the sand;
Go, vilest of the living vile,
To build the never-ending pile,
Till, darkest of the nameless dead,
The vulture on their flesh is fed!
What better asks the howling slave
Than the base life our bounty gave?"

Shouted in pride the turbaned peers,
Upelashed to heaven the golden spears.
"King! thou and thine are doomed! Behold!"
The prophet spoke,— the thunder rolled!
Along the pathway of the sun
Sailed vapory mountains, wild and dun.
"Yet there is time," the prophet said, —
He raised his staff, the storm was stayed.
"King! be the word of freedom given;
What art thou, man, to war with Heaven?"
There came no word. The thunder broke
Like a huge city's final smoke,
Thick, lurid, stifling, mixed with flame,
Through court and hall the vapors came.

Loose as the stubble in the field,
Wide flew the men of spear and shield;
Scattered like foam along the wave,
Flew the proud pageant, prince and slave;
Or, in the chains of terror bound,
Lay, corpse-like, on the smouldering ground.
“Speak, King! the wrath is but begun,—
Still dumb?—Then, Heaven, thy will be done!”

Echoed from earth a hollow roar,
Like ocean on the midnight shore;
A sheet of lightning o’er them wheeled,
The solid ground beneath them reeled;
In dust sank roof and battlement;
Like webs the giant walls were rent;
Red, broad, before his startled gaze,
The monarch saw his Egypt blaze.
Still swelled the plague,—the flame grew pale,
Burst from the clouds the charge of hail;
With arrowy keenness, iron weight,
Down poured the ministers of fate;
Till man and cattle, crushed, congealed,
Covered with death the boundless field.

Still swelled the plague,—uprose the blast,
The avenger, fit to be the last;
On ocean, river, forest, vale,
Thundered at once the mighty gale.
Before the whirlwind flew the tree,
Beneath the whirlwind roared the sea;
A thousand ships were on the wave,—

Where are they ? ask that foaming grave !
Down go the hope, the pride of years ;
Down go the myriad mariners ;
The riches of Earth's richest zone,
Gone ! like a flash of lightning, gone !

And, lo ! that first fierce triumph o'er,
Swells ocean on the shrinking shore ;
Still onward, onward, dark and wide,
Engulfs the land the furious tide.
Then bowed thy spirit, stubborn king,
Thou serpent, reft of fang and sting :
Humbled before the prophet's knee,
He groaned, " Be injured Israel free ! "

To heaven the sage upraised his wand :
Back rolled the deluge from the land ;
Back to its caverns sank the gale ;
Fled from the noon the vapors pale ;
Broad burned again the joyous sun ; —
The hour of wrath and death was done.

George Croly.

AN EGYPTIAN TOMB.

POMP of Egypt's elder day,
Shade of the mighty passed away,
Whose giant works still frown sublime
Mid the twilight shades of time ;
Fanes, of sculpture vast and rude,
That strew the sandy solitude,

Lo ! before our startled eyes,
As at a wizard's wand, ye rise,
Glimmering larger through the gloom !
While on the secrets of the tomb,
Rapt in other times, we gaze,
The Mother Queen of ancient days,
Her mystic symbol in her hand,
Great Isis, seems herself to stand.

From mazy vaults, high-arched and dim,
Hark ! heard ye not Osiris' hymn ?
And saw ye not in order dread
The long procession of the dead ?
Forms that the night of years concealed,
As by a flash, are here revealed ;
Chiefs who sang the victor song ;
Sceptred kings, — a shadowy throng, —
From slumber of three thousand years
Each, as in light and life, appears,
Stern as of yore ! Yes, vision vast,
Three thousand years have silent passed,
Suns of empire risen and set,
Whose story Time can ne'er forget,
Time, in the morning of her pride
Immense, along the Nile's green side,
The City of the Sun appeared,
And her gigantic image reared.

As Memnon, like a trembling string
When the sun, with rising ray,
-Streaked the lonely desert gray,

Sent forth its magic murmuring,
That just was heard, — then died away ;
So passed, O Thebes ! thy morning pride !
Thy glory was the sound that died !
Dark city of the desolate,
Once thou wert rich, and proud, and great !
This busy-peopled isle was then
A waste, or roamed by savage men
Whose gay descendants now appear
To mark thy wreck of glory here.

Phantom of that city old,
Whose mystic spoils I now behold,
A kingdom's sepulchre, O, say,
Shall Albion's own illustrious day
Thus darkly close ! Her power, her fame,
Thus pass away, a shade, a name !
The Mausoleum murmured as I spoke ;
A spectre seemed to rise, like towering smoke ;
It answered not, but pointed as it fled
To the black carcass of the sightless dead.
Once more I heard the sounds of earthly strife,
And the streets ringing to the stir of life.

William Lisle Bowles.

TO AN EGYPTIAN MUMMY.

AND thou hast walked about — how strange a story ! —
In Thebes's streets, three thousand years ago !
When the Memnonium was in all its glory,
And time had not begun to overthrow

Those temples, palaces, and piles stupendous,
Of which the very ruins are tremendous !

Speak ! for thou long enough hast acted dummy ;
Thou hast a tongue, — come, let us hear its tune !
Thou 'rt standing on thy legs, above ground, mummy
Revisiting the glimpses of the moon, —
Not like thin ghosts or disembodied creatures,
But with thy bones, and flesh, and limbs, and features !

Tell us, — for doubtless thou canst recollect, —
To whom should we assign the Sphinx's fame ?
Was Cheops or Cephrenes architect
Of either pyramid that bears his name ?
Is Pompey's Pillar really a misnomer ?
Had Thebes a hundred gates, as sung by Homer ?

Perhaps thou wert a mason, and forbidden,
By oath, to tell the mysteries of thy trade ;
Then say, what secret melody was hidden
In Memnon's statue, which at sunrise played ?
Perhaps thou wert a priest ; if so, my struggles
Are vain, for priestcraft never owns its juggles !

Perchance that very hand, now pinioned flat,
Hath hob-a-nobbed with Pharaoh, glass to glass ;
Or dropped a halfpenny in Homer's hat ;
Or doffed thine own, to let Queen Dido pass ;
Or held, by Solomon's own invitation,
A torch at the great temple's dedication !

I need not ask thee if that hand, when armed,
Has any Roman soldier mauled and knuckled ;

For thou wert dead, and buried, and embalmed,
Ere Romulus and Remus had been suckled :
Antiquity appears to have begun
Long after thy primeval race was run.

Thou couldst develop, if that withered tongue
Might tell us what those sightless orbs have seen,
How the world looked when it was fresh and young,
And the great deluge still had left it green ;
Or was it then so old that history's pages
Contained no record of its early ages ?

Still silent ! — Incommunicative elf !

Art sworn to secrecy ? Then keep thy vows !
But, prithee, tell us something of thyself, —
Reveal the secrets of thy prison-house ;
Since in the world of spirits thou hast slumbered,
What hast thou seen, what strange adventures num-
bered ?

Since first thy form was in this box extended,
We have, above ground, seen some strange mutations ;
The Roman Empire has begun and ended,
New worlds have risen, we have lost old nations,
And countless kings have into dust been humbled,
While not a fragment of thy flesh has crumbled.

Didst thou not hear the pothor o'er thy head,
When the great Persian conqueror, Cambyses,
Marched armies o'er thy tomb with thundering tread,
O'erthrew Osiris, Orus, Apis, Isis, —

And shook the pyramids with fear and wonder,
When the gigantic Memnon fell asunder?

If the tomb's secrets may not be confessed,
The nature of thy private life unfold!
A heart hath throbbed beneath that leathern breast,
And tears adown that dusty cheek have rolled;
Have children climbed those knees, and kissed that face?
What was thy name and station, age and race?

Statue of flesh! Immortal of the dead!
Imperishable type of evanescence!
Posthumous man, who quitt'st thy narrow bed,
And standest undecayed within our presence!
Thou wilt hear nothing till the Judgment morning,
When the great trump shall thrill thee with its warn-
ing!

Why should this worthless tegument endure,
If its undying guest be lost forever?
O, let us keep the soul embalmed and pure
In living virtue, that when both must sever,
Although corruption may our frame consume,
The immortal spirit in the skies may bloom!

Horace Smith.

THE PYRAMIDS OF EGYPT.

YE marvels of this ancient land,
Ye dwellings of the dead,
Where crownéd brow and sceptred hand
Sleep in their dreamless bed,

Lone monuments of other days
Who lift to Heaven your ceaseless gaze, —

Speak, for within your murky stone
Philosophy may hear
An echo of a hallowed tone,
Telling to mortal ear
Lessons of wisdom deep and stern, —
Lessons which pride is slow to learn; —

Speak how the glory and the power,
The diadems of kings,
Are but the visions of an hour,
All unenduring things;
And how that Death hath made for all
A chamber in his silent hall.

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We know, we know that all must die!
Where is our knowledge then, —
The plotting head, the beaming eye,
The boasts of mortal men?
In earth's oblivion, dull and deep,
We sleep our unawakened sleep;

Like forms that float in twilight's shade,
And ere the day are gone, —
When from his misty joyless glade
Stern Hades glideth on,
Wrapt in his robe of quiet gloom,
To call us to the silent tomb.

He will not loose in that dread hour
The monarch's jewelled brow,
Won by the wealth, the pomp of power,
In which he joyeth now :
Poor mortal ! while the sun of spring
Smiles on his warm imagining, —

Unhappy ! — he hath thoughts of pride,
And aspirations vain,
And marches with a godlike stride,
Chilling the courtier train
With the cold glance of royal ire,
More dreaded than the lightning fire.

And what are these ? in cold and cloud
The motley pageant flies !
Weep for the weakness of the proud,
The follies of the wise !
Ever within the golden ring
That rounds the temples of a king,

Death, Lord of all beneath the sky,
Holdeth his stubborn court ;
And, as he gives to royalty
Its momentary sport,
Points his wan finger all the while
With shaking head and bitter smile :

And at the last the phantom thin
Leaps up within the hold ;
And, with a little hidden pin,
Bores through his wall of gold.

What are we in our fate and fall?
Night, night, the jailer of us all,

Hath bound in her funereal chain
The beautiful, the brave,
The ignorant of human pain,
The lord of land and wave,
The shepherd of his people's rest,
The ever and the wholly blest.

And straight among the courtier bands
The hired lamentings rise;
And there is striking of fair hands,
And weeping of bright eyes;
And the long locks of women fall
In sorrow round that gorgeous hall.

And last, upon some solemn day,
The tomb of all his race
Hath opened for his shivering clay
The dismal dwelling-place,
The dim abyss of sculptured stones,
The prison-house of royal bones.

These are the honors of the dead!
But, as I wander by,
And gaze upon yon marble bed
With lost and loitering eye,
Till back upon my awestruck soul
A thousand ages seem to roll,

I muse on thee, whom this recess
Hides in its pathless gloom,

Thy glory and thy nothingness,
Thine empire and thy tomb;
And call thee, Psammis, back to light,
Back from the veil of death and night.

Come from thy darkness! all too long
Thou lingerest in the grave;
Thou, the destroyer of the strong,
The powerful to save:
Come from thy darkness; set again
Thy saffron sandal on the plain;

And bid thy golden sceptre gleam
Its wonted radiance yet;
And let thy bright tiara beam
Around thy locks of jet;
And play the king upon this spot
As when — alas! thou listenest not!

Thy might hath fled from the day;
Thy very name is hid;
Yet pride hath heaped upon thy clay
A ponderous Pyramid;
And thou art kingly still, and blest
In a right royal place of rest.

O, what is this to thee or thine?
Some traveller idly stalks
Around the tomb of all thy line,
And tramples as he walks
With rebel foot and reckless eye,
The dust which once was majesty.

Thy portrait and thy eulogy
Traced by some artist hand,
And all that now remains of thee,
Dragged to a distant land,
Must be a thing for girls to know,
A jest, a marvel, and a show!

Winthrop Mackworth Praed.

FESTAL DIRGE.

“AT the entertainments of the rich, just as the company is about to rise from the repast, a small coffin is carried round, containing a perfect representation of a dead body; it is in size sometimes of one, but never more than two cubits, and as it is shown to the guests in rotation the bearer exclaims, “Cast your eyes on this figure; after death you yourself will resemble it; drink, then, and be happy.”—HERODOTUS, *Euterpe*, xxviii.

THE song of the house of King Antuf,
Deceased, which is written in front of
The player on the harp.
All hail to the good Prince, the worthy good man,
The body is fated to pass away,
The atoms remain, ever since
The time of the ancestors.
The gods who were beforetime
Rest in their tombs,
The mummies of the saints
Likewise are enwrapped in their tombs.
They who build houses,
And they who have no houses, see!
What becomes of them.

I have heard the words
Of Imhotep and Hartatef.
It is said in their sayings,
“After all, what is prosperity?
Their fenced walls are dilapidated.
Their houses are as that which has never existed.
No man comes from thence
Who tells of their sayings,
Who tells of their affairs,
Who encourages our hearts.
Ye go to the place whence they return not.
Strengthen thy heart to forget
How thou hast enjoyed thyself,
Fulfil thy desire whilst thou livest.
Put oils upon thy head,
Clothe thyself with fine linen
Adorned with precious metals,
With the gifts of God
Multiply thy good things,
Yield to thy desire,
Fulfil thy desire with thy good things,
Whilst thou art upon earth,
According to the dictation of thy heart.
The day will come to thee,
When one hears not the voice,
When the one who is at rest
Hears not their voices.
Lamentations deliver not
Him who is in the tomb.
Feast in tranquillity,
Seeing that there is no one

Who carries away his goods with him.
Yea, behold, none who goes thither
Comes back again.

From the Egyptian. Tr. C. W. Goodwin.

ISIS AND OSIRIS.

WELL therefore did the antique world invent
That Iustice was a god of souveraine grace,
And altars unto him and temples lent,
And heavenly honours in the highest place;
Calling him great Osyris, of the race
Of th' old Ægyptian kings that whylome were;
With fayned colours shading a true case;
For that Osyris, whilest he lived here,
The iustest man alive and truest did appeare.

His wife was Isis; whom they likewise made
A goddessse of great powre and soverainty,
And in her person cunningly did shade
That part of Iustice which is Equity,
Whereof I have to treat here presently:
Unto whose Temple whenas Britomart
Arrived, shee with great humility
Did enter in, ne would that night depart;
But Talus mote not be admitted to her part.

There she received was in goodly wize
Of many priests, which duely did attend
Upon the rites and daily sacrifice,

All clad in linnen robes with silver hemd;
And on their heads with long locks comely kemd
They wore rich mitres shaped like the moone,
To shew that Isis doth the moone portend;
Like as Osyris signifies the sunne:
For that they both like race in equall iustice runne.

The Championesse them greeting, as she could,
Was thence by them into the Temple led;
Whose goodly building when she did behould
Borne uppon stately pillours, all dispred
With shining gold, and arched over hed,
She wondred at the workmans passing skill,
Whose like before she never saw nor red;
And thereuppon long while stood gazing still,
But thought that she thereon could never gaze her fill.

Thenceforth unto the Idoll they her brought;
The which was framed all of silver fine,
So well as could with cunning hand be wrought,
And clothed all in garments made of line,
Hemd all about with fringe of silver twine:
Uppon her head she wore a crowne of gold;
To shew that she had powre in things divine;
And at her feet a crocodile was rold,
That with her wreathed taile her middle did enfold.

One foote was set uppon the crocodile,
And on the ground the other fast did stand;
So meaning to suppress both forged guile
And open force: and in her other hand

She stretched forth a long white scender wand.
Such was the goddess: whom when Britomart
Had long beheld, herselfe uppon the land
She did prostrate, and with right humble hart
Unto herselfe her silent prayers did impart.

Edmund Spenser.

A MEDITATION.

PORTENTOUS Egypt! I in thee behold
And studiously examine human-kind,
Learning to know me in mine origin,
In the primeval and the social state.
A cultivator first, man next obeyed
Wise Nature's voice internal, equal men
Uniting, and to empire raising law,
The expression of the universal will,
That gives to virtue recompense, to crime
Due punishment, and to the general good
Bids private interest be sacrificed.
In thee the exalted temple of the arts
Was founded, high in thee they rose, in thee
Long ages saw their proudest excellence.
The Persian worshipper of sun or fire
From thee derived his creed. The arts from thee
Followed Sesostri's arms to the utmost plains
Of the scorched Orient, in caution where
Lurks the Chinese. Thou wondrous Egypt! through
Vast Hindostan thy worship and thy laws
I trace. In thee to the inquirer's gaze
Nature uncovered first the ample breast

Planted midst centuries' shade, Time 'gainst their tops
Searce grazes his ne'er-resting iron wing.

In Egypt to perfection did the arts
Attain; in Egypt they declined, they died :
Of all that's mortal such the unfailing lot ;
Only the light of science 'gainst Death's law
Eternally endures. The basis firm
Of the fair temple of Geometry
Was in portentous Egypt laid. The doors
Of vasty Nature by Geometry
Are opened; to her fortress she conducts
The sage. With her, beneath the fervid sun,
The globe I measure; only by her aid
Couldst thou, learned Kepler, the eternal laws
Of the fixed stars discover; and with her
Grasps the philosopher the ellipse immense,
Eccentric, of the sad, and erst unknown,
Far-wandering comet. Justly if I claim
The name geometrician, certainly
Matter inert is not what in me thinks.

José Agostinho de Macedo. Tr. Anon.

THE DESTROYING ANGEL.

IT was the time when the still moon
Was mounted softly to her noon,
And dewy sleep, which from night's secret springs arose,
Gently as Nile the land o'erflows ;
When, lo, from the high countries of refinéd day,
The golden heaven without allay, —

Whose dross in the creation purged away,
Made up the sun's adulterate ray, —
Michael, the warlike prince, does downward fly,
Swift as the journeys of the sight,
Swift as the race of light,
And with his wingéd will cuts through the yielding sky.
He passed through many a star, and, as he passed,
Shone (like a star in them) more brightly there
Than they did in their sphere.
On a tall pyramid's pointed head he stopped at last,
And a mild look of sacred pity cast
Down on the sinful land where he was sent
To inflict the tardy punishment.
"Ah, yet," said he, "yet, stubborn king, repent,
While thus unarmed I stand,
Ere the keen sword of God fill my commanded hand.
Suffer but yet thyself and thine to live;
Who would, alas, believe,
That it for man," said he,
"So hard to be forgiven should be,
And yet for God so easy to forgive."

Abraham Cowley.

THE SONS OF CUSH.

•
STILL fearful of the flood,
They on the marble range and cloudy heights
Of that vast mountain barrier, — which uprises
High o'er the Red Sea coast, and stretches on
With the sea-line of Afric's southern bounds
To Sofala, — delved in the granite mass

Their dark abode, spreading from rock to rock
Their subterranean cities, whilst they heard,
Secure, the rains of vexed Orion rush.
Emboldened they descend, and now their fanes
On Egypt's champaign darken, whilst the noise
Of caravans is heard, and pyramids
In the pale distance gleam. Imperial Thebes
Starts, like a giant, from the dust; as when
Some dread enchanter waves his wand, and towers
And palaces far in the sandy wilds
Spring up: and still, her sphinxes, huge and high,
Her marble wrecks colossal, seem to speak
The work of some great arm invisible,
Surpassing human strength; while toiling Time,
That sways his desolating scythe so vast,
And weary Havoe murmuring at his side,
Smite them in vain.

William Lisle Bowles.

GEBIR.

GEBIR, at Egypt's youthful queen's approach
Laid by his orbéd shield; his vizor-helm,
His buckler, and his corset he laid by,
And bade that none attend him: at his side
Two faithful dogs that urge the silent course,
Shaggy, deep-chested, croucht; the crocodile,
Crying, oft made them raise their flaccid ears
And push their heads within their master's hand.
There was a brightening paleness in his face,
Such as Diana rising o'er the rocks

Showered on the lonely Latmian; on his brow
Sorrow there was, yet naught was there severe.
But when the royal damsel first he saw,
Faint, hanging on her handmaid, and her knees
Tottering, as from the motion of the car,
His eyes lookt earnest on her, and those eyes
Showed, if they had not, that they might have, loved,
For there was pity in them at that hour.
With gentle speech, and more with gentle looks,
He soothed her; but lest Pity go beyond
And crost Ambition lose her lofty aim,
Bending, he kist her garment, and retired.
He went, nor slumbered in the sultry noon,
When viands, couches, generous wines, persuade,
And slumber most refreshes; nor at night,
When heavy dews are laden with disease;
And blindness waits not there for lingering age.
Ere morning dawned behind him, he arrived
At those rich meadows where young Tamar fed
The royal flocks intrusted to his care.
“Now,” said he to himself, “will I repose
At least this burthen on a brother’s breast.”
His brother stood before him: he, amazed,
Reared suddenly his head, and thus began;
“Is it thou, brother! Tamar, is it thou!
Why, standing on the valley’s utmost verge,
Lookest thou on that dull and dreary shore
Where beyond sight Nile blackens all the sand?
And why that sadness? When I past our sheep
The dew-drops were not shaken off the bar,
Therefor if one be wanting, ’tis untold.”

"Yes, one is wanting, nor is that untold,"
Said Tamar; "and this dull and dreary shore
Is neither dull nor dreary at all hours."
Whereon the tear stole silent down his cheek,
Silent, but not by Gebir unobserved:
Wondering he gazed awhile, and pitying spake.
"Let me approach thee; does the morning light
Scatter this wan suffusion o'er thy brow,
This faint blue lustre under both thine eyes?"

"O brother, is this pity or reproach?"
Cried Tamar; "cruel if it be reproach,
If pity, O how vain!" "Whate'er it be
That grieves thee, I will pity, thou but speak,
And I can tell thee, Tamar, pang for pang."

"Gebir! then more than brothers are we now!
Everything (take my hand) will I confess.
I neither feed the flock nor watch the fold;
How can I, lost in love? But, Gebir, why
That anger which has risen to your cheek?
Can other men? could you? what, no reply!
And still more anger, and still worse concealed!
Are these your promises? your pity this?"

"Tamar, I well may pity what I feel—
Mark me aright—I feel for thee—proceed—
Relate me all." "Then will I all relate,"
Said the young shepherd, gladdened from his heart.
"T was evening, though not sunset, and the tide
Level with these green meadows, seemed yet higher:
T was pleasant; and I loosened from my neck
The pipe you gave me, and began to play.
O that I ne'er had learnt the tuneful art!

It always brings us enemies or love.
Well, I was playing, when above the waves
Some swimmer's head methought I saw ascend;
I, sitting near, surveyed it, with my pipe
Awkwardly held before my lips half-closed.
Gebir! it was a nymph! a nymph divine!
I cannot wait describing how she came,
How I was sitting, how she first assumed
The sailor; of what happened there remains
Enough to say, and too much to forget.
The sweet deceiver stept upon this bank
Before I was aware; for with surprise
Moments fly rapid as with love itself.
Stooping to tune afresh the hoarsened reed,
I heard a rustling, and where that arose
My glance first lighted on her nimble feet.
Her feet resembled those long shells explored
By him who to befriend his steed's dim sight
Would blow the pungent powder in the eye.
Her eyes too! O immortal Gods! her eyes
Resembled — what could they resemble? what
Ever resemble those? Even her attire
Was not of wonted woof nor vulgar art;
Her mantle showed the yellow samphire-pod,
Her girdle the dove-colored wave serene.
'Shepherd,' said she, 'and will you wrestle now,
And with the sailor's hardier race engage?'
I was rejoiced to hear it, and contrived
How to keep up contention: could I fail
By pressing not too strongly, yet to press?
'Whether a shepherd, as indeed you seem,

Or whether of the hardier race you boast,
I am not daunted; no; I will engage.'
'But first,' said she, 'what wager will you lay?'
'A sheep,' I answered: 'add whate'er you will.'
'I cannot,' she replied, 'make that return:
Our hidèd vessels in their pitchy round
Seldom, unless from rapine, hold a sheep.
But I have sinuous shells of pearly hue
Within, and they that lustre have imbibed
In the Sun's palace-porch, where when unyoked
His chariot-wheel stands midway in the wave:
Shake one and it awakens, then apply
Its polisht lips to your attentive ear,
And it remembers its august abodes,
And murmurs as the ocean murmurs there.
And I have others given me by the Nymphs,
Of sweeter sound than any pipe you have;
But we, by Neptune! for no pipe contend,
This time a sheep I win, a pipe the next.'
Now came she forward, eager to engage,
But first her dress, her bosom then surveyed,
And heaved it, doubting if she could deceive.
Her bosom seemed, enclosed in haze like heaven,
To baffle touch, and rose forth undefined:
Above her knee she drew the robe succinet,
Above her breast, and just below her arms.
'This will preserve my breath when tightly bound,
If struggle and equal strength should so constrain.'
Thus, pulling hard to fasten it, she spake,
And, rushing at me, closed: I thrilled throughout
And seemed to lessen and shrink up with cold.

Again with violent impulse gusht my blood,
And hearing naught external, thus absorbed,
I heard it, rushing through each turbid vein,
Shake my unsteady, swimming sight in air.
Yet with unyielding though uncertain arms
I clung around her neck; the vest beneath
Rustled against our slippery limbs entwined;
Often mine springing with eluded force
Started aside and trembled till replaced:
And when I most succeeded, as I thought,
My bosom and my throat felt so comprest
That life was almost quivering on my lips,
Yet nothing was there painful: these are signs
Of secret arts and not of human might;
What arts I cannot tell; I only know
My eyes grew dizzy and my strength decayed;
I was indeed o'ercome — with what regret,
And more, with what confusion, when I reacht
The fold, and yielding up the sheep, she cried,
'This pays a shepherd to a conquering maid.'
She smiled, and more of pleasure than disdain
Was in her dimpled chin and liberal lip,
And eyes that languisht, lengthening, just like love.
She went away; I on the wicker gate
Leaned, and could follow with my eyes alone.
The sheep she carried easy as a cloak;
But when I heard its bleating, as I did,
And saw, she hastening on, its hinder feet
Struggle, and from her snowy shoulder slip,
One shoulder its poor efforts had unveiled,
Then all my passions mingling fell in tears;

Restless then ran I to the highest ground
To watch her; she was gone; gone down the tide;
And the long moonbeam on the hard wet sand
Lay like a jasper column half upreared."

Walter Savage Landor.

THE WITCH OF ATLAS.

BUT her choice sport was, in the hours of sleep,
To glide adown old Nilus, when he threads
Egypt and Ethiopia, from the steep
Of utmost Axumé, until he spreads,
Like a calm flock of silver-fleeced sheep,
His waters on the plain; and crested heads
Of cities and proud temples gleam amid,
And many a vapor-belted pyramid.

By Mæris and the Mareotid lakes,
Strewn with faint blooms like bridal-chamber floors;
Where naked boys bridling tame water-snakes,
Or charioteering ghastly alligators,
Had left on the sweet waters mighty wakes
Of those huge forms; — within the brazen doors
Of the great Labyrinth slept both boy and beast,
Tired with the pomp of their Osirian feast.

And where within the surface of the river
The shadows of the massy temples lie,
And never are erased, but tremble ever
Like things which every cloud can doom to die,

Through lotus-paven canals, and wheresoever

The works of man pierced that serenest sky
With tombs, and towers, and fanes, 't was her delight
To wander in the shadow of the night.

Percy Bysshe Shelley.

TO THE ALABASTER SARCOPHAGUS

DEPOSITED IN THE BRITISH MUSEUM.

THOU alabaster relic! while I hold
My hand upon thy sculptured margin thrown,
Let me recall the scenes thou couldst unfold,
Might'st thou relate the changes thou hast known;
For thou wert primitive in thy formation,
Launched from the Almighty's hand at the creation.

Yes! thou wert present when the stars and skies
And worlds unnumbered rolled into their places;
When God from chaos bade the spheres arise,
And fixed the blazing sun upon its basis,
And with his finger on the bounds of space
Marked out each planet's everlasting race.

How many thousand ages from thy birth
Thou slept'st in darkness it were vain to ask,
Till Egypt's sons upheaved thee from the earth,
And year by year pursued their patient task,
Till thou wert carved and decorated thus,
Worthy to be a king's sarcophagus!

What time Elijah to the skies ascended,
Or David reigned in holy Palestine,
Some ancient Theban monarch was extended
Beneath the lid of this emblazoned shrine,
And to that subterraneous palace borne,
Which toiling ages in the rock had worn.

Thebes, from her hundred portals, filled the plain,
To see the car on which thou wert upheld;
What funeral pomps extended in thy train,
What banners waved, what mighty music swelled,
As armies, priests, and crowds bewailed in chorus,
Their king, their god, their Serapis, their Orus!

Thus to thy second quarry did they trust
Thee, and the lord of all the nations round,
Grim king of silence! monarch of the dust!
Embalmed, anointed, jewelled, sceptred, crowned,
Here did he lie in state, cold, stiff, and stark,
A leathern Pharaoh grinning in the dark.

Thus ages rolled; but their dissolving breath
Could only blacken that imprisoned thing,
Which wore a ghastly royalty in death,
As if it struggled still to be a king;
And each dissolving century, like the last,
Just dropped its dust upon thy lid, and passed.

The Persian conqueror o'er Egypt poured
His devastating host, — a motley crew;
The steel-clad horseman, the barbarian horde,
Music and men of every sound and hue,

Priests, archers, eunuchs, concubines, and brutes,
Gongs, trumpets, cymbals, dulcimers, and lutes.

Then did the fierce Cambyzes tear away

The ponderous rock that sealed the sacred tomb;
Then did the slowly penetrating ray

Redeem thee from long centuries of gloom,
And lowered torches flashed against thy side,
As Asia's king thy blazoned trophies eyed.

Plucked from his grave, with sacrilegious taunt,

The features of the royal corse they scanned;
Dashing the diadem from his temple gaunt,
They tore the sceptre from his graspless hand;
And on those fields, where once his will was law,
Left him for winds to waste and beasts to gnaw.

Some pious Thebans, when the storm was past,

Upelosed the sepulchre with cunning skill,
And nature, aiding their devotion, cast
Over its entrance a concealing rill;
Then thy third darkness came, and thou didst sleep
Twenty-three centuries in silence deep.

But he from whom nor pyramids nor sphinx

Can hide its secrecies, Belzoni, came;
From the tomb's mouth unlinked the granite links,
Gave thee again to light and life and fame,
And brought thee from the sands and deserts forth,
To charm the pallid children of the north!

Thou art in London, which, when thou wert new,
Was what Thebes is, a wilderness and waste,

Where savage beast more savage men pursue;
A scene by nature cursed, by man disgraced.
Now, 't is the world's metropolis! The high
Queen of arms, learning, arts, and luxury!

Here, where I hold my hand, 't is strange to think
What other hands, perchance, preceded mine;
Others have also stood beside thy brink,
And vainly coned the moralizing line!
Kings, sages, chiefs, that touched this stone, like me,
Where are ye now? Where all must shortly be.

All is mutation; he within this stone
Was once the greatest monarch of the hour.
His bones are dust, his very name unknown!
Go, learn from him the vanity of power;
Seek not the frame's corruption to control,
But build a lasting mansion for thy soul.

Horace Smith.

THE PAPYRUS.

ANCIENT wisdom may boast of the spice and the
weed,
Which embalmed the cold forms of its heroes and
sages;
But their fame lives alone on the leaf of the reed,
Which has grown through the clefts in the ruins of
ages.

Robert Treat Paine.

MACARIUS THE MONK.

IN the old days, while yet the church was young,
And men believed that praise of God was sung
In curbing self as well as singing psalms,
There lived a monk, Macarius by name,
A holy man, to whom the faithful came
With hungry hearts to hear the wondrous Word.
In sight of gushing springs and sheltering palms,
He lived upon the desert; from the marsh
He drank the brackish water, and his food
Was dates and roots, — and all his rule was harsh,
For pampered flesh in those days warred with good.

From those who came in scores a few there were
Who feared the devil more than fast and prayer,
And these remained and took the hermit's vow.
A dozen saints there grew to be; and now
Macarius, happy, lived in larger care.
He taught his brethren all the lore he knew,
And as they learned, his pious rigors grew.
His whole intent was on the spirit's goal:
He taught them silence, — words disturb the soul;
He warned of joys, and bade them pray for sorrow,
And be prepared to-day for death to-morrow;
To know that human life alone was given
To prove the souls of those who merit heaven;
He bade the twelve in all things be as brothers,
And die to self, to live and work for others.

“For so,” he said, “we save our love and labors,
And each one gives his own and takes his neighbor’s.”

Thus long he taught, and while they silent heard,
He prayed for fruitful soil to hold the word.

One day, beside the marsh they labored long, —
For worldly work makes sweeter sacred song, —
And when the cruel sun made hot the sand,
And Afric’s gnats the sweltering face and hand
Tormenting stung, a passing traveller stood
And watched the workers by the reeking flood.
Macarius, nigh, with heat and toil was faint;
The traveller saw, and to the suffering saint
A bunch of luscious grapes in pity threw.
Most sweet and fresh and fair they were to view,
A generous cluster, bursting-rich with wine.
Macarius longed to taste. “The fruit is mine,”
He said, and sighed; “but I, who daily teach,
Feel now the bond to practise as I preach.”
He gave the cluster to the nearest one,
And with his heavy toil went patient on.

As one athirst will greet a flowing brim,
The tempting fruit made moist the mouth of him
Who took the gift; but in the yearning eye
Rose brighter light: to one whose lip was dry
He gave the grapes, and bent him to his spade.
And he who took, unknown to any other,
The sweet refreshment handed to a brother.
And so, from each to each, till round was made

The circuit wholly, — when the grapes at last,
Untouched and tempting, to Macarius passed.

“Now God be thanked!” he cried, and ceased to toil;
“The seed was good, but better was the soil.
My brothers, join with me to bless the day.”
But, ere they knelt, he threw the grapes away.

John Boyle O'Reilly.

THE PYRAMIDS.

AFTER the fantasies of many a night,
After the deep desires of many a day,
Rejoicing as an ancient Eremite
Upon the desert's edge at last I lay:
Before me rose, in wonderful array,
Those works where man has rivalled Nature most,
Those Pyramids, that fear no more decay
Than waves inflict upon the rockiest coast,
Or winds on mountain-steeps, and like endurance boast.

Fragments the deluge of old Time has left
Behind it in its subsidence, — long walls
Of cities of their very names bereft, —
Lone columns, remnants of majestic halls, —
Rich-traceried chambers, where the night-dew falls, —
All have I seen with feelings due, I trow,
Yet not with such as these memorials
Of the great unremembered, that can show
The mass and shape they wore four thousand years
ago.

Lord Houghton.

PELTERS OF PYRAMIDS.

A SHOAL of idlers, from a merchant craft
Anchored off Alexandria, went ashore,
And mounting asses in their headlong glee,
Round Pompey's Pillar rode with hoots and taunts, —
As men oft say, "What art thou more than we?"
Next in a boat they floated up the Nile,
Singing and drinking, swearing senseless oaths,
Shouting, and laughing most derisively
At all majestic scenes. A bank they reached,
And, clambering up, played gambols among tombs;
And in portentous ruins (through whose depths —
The mighty twilight of departed gods —
Both sun and moon glanced furtive, as in awe)
They hid, and whooped, and spat on sacred things.

At length, beneath the blazing sun they lounged
Near a great Pyramid. Awhile they stood
With stupid stare, until resentment grew,
In the recoil of meanness from the vast;
And, gathering stones, they, with coarse oaths and gibes,
(As they would say, "What art thou more than we?")
Pelted the Pyramid! But soon these men,
Hot and exhausted, sat them down to drink, —
Wrangled, smoked, spat, and laughed, and drowsily
Cursed the bald Pyramid, and fell asleep.

Night came: — a little sand went drifting by —
And morn again was in the soft blue heavens.

The broad slopes of the shining Pyramid
Looked down in their austere simplicity
Upon the glistening silence of the sands
Whereon no trace of mortal dust was seen.

Richard Hengist Horne.

THE SPHINX AND THE PYRAMIDS.

THE shadow of the Pyramids
Fled round before the sun :
By day it fled,
It onward sped ;
And when its daily task was done,
The moon arose, and round the plain
The weary shadow fled again.

The Sphinx looked east,
The Sphinx looked west,
And north and south her shadow fell ;
How many times she sought for rest
And found it not, no tongue may tell.

But much it vexed the heart of greedy Time
That neither rain nor snow, nor frost nor hail,
Troubles the calm of the Egyptian clime ;
For these for him, like heavy iron flail,
And wedge and saw, and biting tooth and file,
Against the palaces of kings prevail,
And crumble down the loftiest pile,
And eat the ancient hills away,
And make the very mountains know decay.

And sorely he would grudge, and much would carp,
That he could never keep his polished blade,
His mowing sickle keen and sharp,
For all the din and all the dust he made.
He cursed the mummies that they would not rot,
He cursed the paintings that they faded not,
And swore to terrible Memnon from his seat;
But, foiled awhile, to hide his great defeat,
With his wide wings he blew the Libyan sand,
And hid from mortal eyes the glories of the land.

George Wilson.

THE SPHINX.

THEY glare, — those stony eyes!
That in the fierce sun-rays
Showered from these burning skies,
Through untold centuries
Have kept their sleepless and unwinking gaze.
Since what unnumbered year
Hast thou kept watch and ward,
And o'er the buried Land of Fear
So grimly held thy guard?
No faithless slumber snatching,
Still couched in silence brave,
Like some fierce hound long watching
Above her master's grave.
No fabled shape art thou!
On that thought-freighted brow
And in those smooth weird lineaments we find,

Though traced all darkly, even now
The relics of a mind :
And gather dimly thence
A vague, half-human sense, —
The strange and sad intelligence
That sorrow leaves behind.

Dost thou in anguish thus
Still brood o'er Œdipus ?
And weave enigmas to mislead anew,
And stultify the blind
Dull heads of human kind,
And inly make thy moan
That, mid the hated crew,
Whom thou so long couldst vex,
Bewilder, and perplex,
Thou yet couldst find a subtler than thine own ?

Even now, methinks that those
Dark, heavy lips, which close
In such a stern repose,
Seem burdened with some thought unsaid,
And hoard within their portals dread
Some fearful secret there,
Which to the listening earth
She may not whisper forth,
Not even to the air !

Of awful wonders hid
In yon dread Pyramid,
The home of magic fears ;
Of chambers vast and lonely,

Watched by the Genii only,
Who tend their masters' long-forgotten biers,
And treasures that have shone
On cavern-walls alone,
For thousand, thousand years.

Those sullen orbs wouldst thou eclipse,
And ope those massy tomb-like lips, —
Many a riddle thou couldst solve,
Which all blindly men revolve.

Would she but tell! She knows
Of the old Pharaohs;
Could count the Ptolemies' long line;
Each mighty myth's original hath seen,
Apis, Anubis, — ghosts that haunt between
The bestial and divine, —
(Such, he that sleeps in Philæ, — he that stands
In gloom, unworshipped, 'neath his rock-hewn fane, —
And they who, sitting on Memnonian sands,
Cast their long shadows o'er the desert plain :)
Hath marked Nitoeris pass,
And Ozymandias
Deep-versed in many a dark Egyptian wile, —
The Hebrew boy hath eyed
Cold to the master's bride;
And that Medusan stare hath frozen the smile
Of all her love and guile,
For whom the Cæsar sighed,
And the world-loser died, —
The darling of the Nile.

Henry Howard Brownell.

THE COLOSSI.

GRIM monarchs of the silent plain,
Seated in motionless, sublime repose,
With faces turned forever toward the dawn,
With eyes that sleep not, lips that ne'er uncloze,—

While kingdoms crumble round their thrones,
In lonely state they keep their ancient seat;
Time's ocean ebbs and flows, with drifting sands,
Like the mysterious river at their feet.

The blithe birds sing their morning song
Where Memnon's voice once rose to greet the sun;
The shadows lengthen nightly toward the west,
The stars shine down, the days pass one by one.

Still side by side they sit, with hands
Laid idly on their mighty knees of stone,—
What thoughts pass through their dim brains, silent
thus,
Companions, yet through centuries alone?

Mourn they their kingdom's vanished might,
Their broken altars, heaped with dust of death?
Or search they the dread future with blank eyes,—
Kings, priests, and gods of a forgotten faith?

Rock-hewn, they last while time shall last,
The hills shall leave their seats as soon as they;
But there is One who brooks no rival thrones,
And breaks all sceptres at the last great Day.

Mid ruins of a passing world,
To their slow height those giant forms shall rise ;
With solemn steps they move to meet their doom,
From the dread presence passing with veiled eyes,

Beneath the gate of an eternal death
They enter, and are lost among the shades, —
In the dim region of perpetual sighs,
Where earthly glory, earthly greatness, fades.

Florence Smith.

THE COLOSSI.

BENIGNANT, calm, majestically grave,
Earth's childhood smiling in their lifted eyes,
While the hoar wisdom which the dead years gave
Upon each placid brow engraven lies —
Two on the plain and four beside the wave
Keep watch and ward above the centuries.
As is the sand which flies, our little lives
Glitter and whirl a moment and are gone ;
A day it lives, then to Oblivion drives
The haughtiest empire and the loftiest throne :
Swiftly to all the appointed hour arrives,
Men, nations pass, but they remain alone,
Mute in the azure silence of these skies,
Immortal childhood looking from their eyes.

Thomas Gold Appleton.

NUBIA.

A LAND of Dreams and Sleep, — a poppied land !
With skies of endless calm above her head,
The drowsy warmth of summer noonday shed

Upon her hills, and silence stern and grand
Throughout her Desert's temple-burying sand.
Before her threshold, in their ancient place,
With closed lips, and fixed, majestic face,
Noteless of Time, her dumb colossi stand.
O, pass them not with light, irreverent tread;
Respect the dream that builds her fallen throne,
And soothes her to oblivion of her woes.
Hush! for she does but sleep; she is not dead:
Action and Toil have made the world their own,
But she hath built an altar to Repose.

Bayard Taylor.

SNOW IN ABYSSINIA.

BRUCE of Kinnaird could scarce repress the smile
That twitched the bearded ambush of his mouth,
When, in his quest of the mysterious Nile,
Amid the perilous wilds of the swart South,
An old man told him, with a grave surprise
Which made his childlike wonder almost grand,
How, in his youth, there fell from out the skies
A feathery whiteness over all their land,
A strange, soft, spotless something, pure as light,
For which their questioned language had no name,
That shone and sparkled for a day and night,
Then vanished all as weirdly as it came,
Leaving no vestige, gleam, or hue, or scent,
On the round hills or in the purple air,
To satisfy their mute bewilderment
That such a presence had indeed been there!

Anonymous.



EGYPT, NUBIA, AND ABYSSINIA.

Alexandria.

ALEXANDRIA.

HERE the vain youth who made the world his prize,
That prosperous robber, Alexander, lies.
When pitying death, at length, had freed mankind,
To sacred rest his bones were here consigned:
His bones, that better had been tossed and hurled,
With just contempt, around the injured world.

Lucan. Tr. N. Rowe.

THE DEATH OF CLEOPATRA.

NOW let us drink; with nimble feet
Now let us strike the holy ground;
With couches deck the temple round
For Saliaric banquets meet.

Which of us, friends, had disinterred
His costly wines, what time the Queen,

Puffed up with pride and female spleen,
Encircled by a loathsome herd

Unsexed, but foul with barren lust,
 Marshalled her powers to overwhelm
 Our Capitol and ancient realm,
And lay Rome's glories in the dust?

But Egypt knows her dream a cheat
 Begot of Marcotic fumes,
 When the devouring fire consumes,
Ship after ship, her Actium fleet.

When Cæsar, following in her wake,
 Like hawk or hunter giving chase
 To timorous dove or hare of Thrace,
Urges his crew to overtake

And load the monster-queen with chains,
 She homeward steers, resolved to die,
 Preferring death to slavery
Or exile from her old domains.

Now, in her royal house serene,
 Upon her breast she dares to clasp
 The venom of the deadly asp,
Unshrinking, to the last a Queen.

She scorns, the haughty one, to go
 In keel Liburnian over sea,
 No golden-fettered captive she
To grace the triumph of her foe.

Horace. Tr. R. M. Hovenden.

THE DEATH OF ANTONY.

Enter, above, CLEOPATRA, CHARMIAN, and IRAS.

CLEOPATRA. O Charmian! I will never go from hence.

CHARMIAN. Be comforted, dear madam.

CLEO.

No, I will not:

All strange and terrible events are welcome,
But comforts we despise; our size of sorrow,
Proportion'd to our cause, must be as great

Enter, below, DIOMEDES.

As that which makes it. How now! is he dead?

DIOMEDES. His death's upon him, but not dead.
Look out o' the other side your monument;
His guard have brought him thither.

Enter, below, ANTONY, borne by the Guard.

CLEO.

O sun,

Burn the great sphere thou mov'st in! — darkling stand
The varying shore o' the world. O Antony,
Antony, Antony! — Help, Charmian! help, Iras, help!
Help, friends below! let's draw him hither.

ANTONY.

Peace!

Not Cæsar's valour hath o'erthrown Antony,
But Antony's hath triumphed on itself.

CLEO. So it should be, that none but Antony
Should conquer Antony; but woe 't is so!

ANT. I am dying, Egypt, dying; only
I here importune death awhile, until

Of many thousand kisses the poor last
I lay upon thy lips. —

CLEO. I dare not, dear,
(Dear my lord, pardon,) I dare not,
Lest I be taken: not th' imperious show
Of the full-fortun'd Cæsar ever shall
Be brooch'd with me; if knife, drugs, serpents have
Edge, sting, or operation, I am safe:
Your wife Octavia, with her modest eyes
And still conclusion, shall acquire no honour
Demuring upon me. — But come, come, Antony, —
Help me, my women, — we must draw thee up: —
Assist, good friends.

ANT. Oh, quick! or I am gone.

CLEO. Here's sport, indeed! — How heavy weighs
my lord!

Our strength is all gone into heaviness,
That makes the weight. Had I great Juno's power,
The strong-wing'd Mercury should fetch thee up,
And set thee by Jove's side. Yet come a little, —
Wishers were ever fools; — Oh, come, come, come!

(They draw ANTONY up.)

And welcome, welcome! die, where thou hast liv'd:
Quicken with kissing; had my lips that power,
Thus would I wear them out.

ALL. A heavy sight!

ANT. I am dying, Egypt, dying:
Give me some wine, and let me speak a little.

CLEO. No, let me speak; and let me rail so high,
That the false huswife Fortune break her wheel,
Provok'd by my offence.

ANT. One word, sweet queen :
Of Cæsar seek your honour with your safety. — Oh !

CLEO. They do not go together.

ANT. Gentle, hear me :
None about Cæsar trust, but Proculeius.

CLEO. My resolution and my hands I'll trust ;
None about Cæsar.

ANT. The miserable change now at my end,
Lament nor sorrow at ; but please your thoughts,
In feeding them with those my former fortunes
Wherein I liv'd, the greatest prince o' the world,
The noblest ; and do now not basely die,
Nor cowardly put off my helmet to
My countryman ; a Roman by a Roman
Valiantly vanquish'd. Now, my spirit is going ;
I can no more.

[Dies.

William Shakespeare.

DEATH OF ANTONY.

I AM dying, Egypt, dying !
Ebbs the crimson life-tide fast,
And the dark Plutonian shadows
Gather on the evening blast.
Let thine arm, O queen, support me !
Hush thy sobs and bow thine ear,
Hearken to the great heart secrets,
Thou, and thou alone, must hear.

Though my scarred and veteran legions
Bear their eagles high no more,

And my wrecked and shattered galleys
Strew dark Actium's fatal shore ;
Though no glittering guards surround me,
Prompt to do their master's will,
I must perish like a Roman, —
Die the great Triumvir still.

Let not Cæsar's servile minions
Mock the lion thus laid low ;
'T was no foeman's hand that slew him,
'T was his own that struck the blow.
Hear, then, pillowed on thy bosom,
Ere his star fades quite away,
Him who, drunk with thy caresses,
Madly flung a world away !

Should the base plebeian rabble
Dare assail my fame at Rome,
Where the noble spouse, Octavia,
Weeps within her widowed home.
Seek her, — say the gods have told me,
Altars, augurs, circling wings,
That her blood, with mine commingled,
Yet shall mount the throne of kings.

And for thee, star-eyed Egyptian !
Glorious sorceress of the Nile,
Light the path to Stygian horrors
With the splendors of thy smile.
Give the Cæsar crowns and arches,
Let his brow the laurel twine ;

I can scorn the Senate's triumphs,
Triumphing in love like thine.

I am dying, Egypt, dying;
Hark! the insulting foeman's cry:
They are coming, — quick, my falchion!
Let me front them ere I die.
Ah! no more amid the battle
Shall my heart exulting swell;
Isis and Osiris guard thee, —
Cleopatra! Rome! farewell!

William H. Lytle.

ALEXANDRIA.

STAND on the gleaming Pharos, and aloud
Shout, Commerce, to the kingdoms of the earth;
Shout, for thy golden portals are set wide,
And all thy streamers o'er the surge, aloft,
In pomp triumphant wave. The weary way
That pale Nearchus passed, from creek to creek
Advancing slow, no longer bounds the track
Of the adventurous mariner, who steers
Steady, with eye intent upon the stars,
To Elam's echoing port. Meantime, more high
Aspiring, o'er the Western main her towers
The imperial city lifts, the central mart
Of nations, and beneath the calm clear sky,
At distance from the palmy marge, displays
Her clustering columns, whitening to the morn.
Damascus' fleece, Golconda's gems, are there.

Murmurs the haven with one ceaseless hum ;
The hurrying camel's bell, the driver's song,
Along the sands resound. Tyre, art thou fallen ?
A prouder city crowns the inland sea,
Raised by his hand who smote thee ; as if thus
His mighty mind were swayed to recompense
The evil of his march through cities stormed,
And regions wet with blood ! and still had flowed
The tide of commerce through the destined track,
Traced by his mind sagacious, who surveyed
The world he conquered with a sage's eye,
As with a soldier's spirit.

William Lisle Bowles.

ALEXANDRIA.

ONE city yet, and Nile's time-hallowed shore
Our fondly lingering step detains no more.
Domes, minarets, their spiry heads that rear,
Mocking with gaudy hues the ruins near ;
Dim crumbling colonnades, and marble walls,
Rich columns, broken statues, roofless halls ;
Beauty, deformity, together thrown,
A maze of ruins, date, design unknown, —
Such is the scene, the conquest Time hath won,
Such the famed city built by Philip's son.
Ah me ! mid tottering towers, and regal tombs,
Tall sculptured columns, echoing catacombs,
How Turkish piles, and works of modern art,
Chafe with romance, and bid high dreams depart !

Nicholas Michell.

PHILIP THE FREEDMAN.

IT was a barren beach on Egypt's strand,
And near the waves, where he had breathed his last,
The form of one slain there by treachery
Lay stripped and mangled. On each manly limb
Somewhat of strength and beauty yet remained,
Though war and toil and travel, and the lapse
Of sixty years save one, had left their marks
Traced visibly.

But the imperial head,
The close-curled locks, and grizzled beard were gone!
Soon to be laid before the feet of one
Who should receive with anguish, horror-struck,
Giver and gift! and, weeping, turn away.

The ruffian task was ended, — the base crowd
Had stared its vulgar fill, — and they were gone,
The murderers and the parasites, — all gone.
But one yet lingered, and beside the dead,
As the last footstep died away, he knelt,
And laved its clotted wounds in the salt sea,
Composed with care the violated frame,
Doffed his own garment, and with reverent hands
Covered the nakedness of those brave limbs.
But for a pile — a few dry boughs of wood
For him, before whose step forests had fallen
And cities blazed! — yet looking, sore perplexed,
He spies the wreck of an old fishing-boat,

Wasted by sun and rain,—yet still enough
For a poor body, naked, unentire.

While yet he laid the ribs and pitchy planks
In such array as might be, decently,
For him, whose giant funeral pyramid
All Rome had raised (could he have died at Rome),
An old man came beside him —

“Who art thou,
That all alone dost tend with this last service
Pompey the Great?” He said, “I am his freedman.”
“Thou shalt not make this honor all thine own!
Since fate affords it, suffer me to share
Thy pious task, though I have undergone
These many years of exile and misfortune,
’T will be one solace to have aided thee
In offering all that now remains to him,
My old commander, — and the greatest, noblest,
That Rome hath ever borne!”

They raised the body,
And tenderly, as we move one in pain,
Laid it upon the pile, in tears and silence.
And one, his friend, — full soon to follow him, —
(Late shipped from Cyprus with Etesian gales,)
Coasting along that desolate shore, beheld
The smoke slow rising, and the funeral pyre
Watched by a single form.

“Who then has ended
His days, and leaves his bones upon this beach?”
He said, and added, with a sigh, “Ah, Pompey!
It may be thou!”

Henry Howard Brownell.

CÆSAR IN TEARS.

CÆSAR, pursuing Pompey, had reached the shore of Alexandria, when Achilles met him, bearing his murdered rival's head covered with a veil. Cæsar turned away his face and wept.

PHARSALIA'S victor nearing Egypt's shore,
By rapid journeys over land and sea,
Pursues his mighty rival. Where is he
Whom Cæsar feared a little while before?
In headless ruin! Pompey is no more.
But in the dead what terrors there may be!
That veiled horror Cæsar's self would flee
Which, for a welcome, base Achilles bore.
The form of gallant Pompey fronts him not;
How dreader yet that gory head of his,
Once dear, so dear to Julia's faithful love!
Julia, in Cæsar's heart all unforgot.
Oh, well may thought of all that was, that is,
To strongest tears the mighty Cæsar move!

Charlotte Fiske Bates.

POMPEY'S PILLAR.

PILLAR of Pompey! gazing o'er the sea,
In solemn pride, and mournful majesty!
When on thy graceful shaft, and towering head,
In quivering crimson, day's last beams are shed,
Thou look'st a thing some spell with life supplies,
Or a rich flame ascending to the skies.

Ah ! well the ill-starred memory dost thou keep
Of Rome's famed son, who perished on yon deep :
Dark was the hour brave Pompey sought this strand,
Flying from foes to die by Treachery's hand.
As fell the stroke on him she could not save,
Cornelia's shriek was heard along the wave,
And viewless nymphs, that rode the ocean gale,
Felt for her woe, and answered to her wail.
He who once vanquished kings, gave crowns away,
Alone, unhonored, on the sea-beach lay,
Till, wrung by grief, an old man, drawing near,
Gazed on the hero's corpse with many a tear,
And raised a funeral pile, and scattered flowers,
Praying his soul might enter heavenly bowers :
Flame, dust, a darksome pit, not tomb of state ;
So set the star of him men named the Great.

Nicholas Michell.

CLEOPATRA'S NEEDLE.

WHAT obelisk northward meets the curious eye ?
Rich as an orient gem, it courts the sky ;
Its tapering sides a myriad sculptures grace,
Dark mystic writing of earth's early race.
Brought from far Thebes, it decked the splendid pile
Where Beauty, famed forever, shed her smile ;
Hence to yon shaft cling memories sweet and rare,
And lore and love their souls are breathing there.
Hail, Cleopatra ! Egypt's peerless queen !
Though crushing Ruin walks the darkened scene,

Still seems her spirit, starlike, to illumine
The mouldered palace and the rock-cut tomb,
Along the columned path to wander slow,
Or fill dark courts with regal pomp and show;
Across yon deep her galley ploughs its way,
The oars of silver flashing through the spray,
While wanton zephyrs spread the silken sail,
And airy music dies on summer's gale.
Yes, her bright shade, her memory, haunt each spot;
The choked-up fount, the ocean's sparry grot,
The flowers that bloom on Pharos' breezy isle,
The graceful palms that fringe the branching Nile, .
The glittering wrecks of glory's vanished hour, —
All speak her fame and love's undying power.

Nicholas Michell.

THE BATTLE OF ALEXANDRIA.

HARP of Memnon! sweetly strung
To the music of the spheres;
While the hero's dirge is sung,
Breathe enchantment to our ears.

As the sun's descending beams,
Glancing o'er thy feeling wire,
Kindle every chord that gleams,
Like a ray of heavenly fire:

Let thy numbers, soft and slow,
O'er the plain with carnage spread,
Soothe the dying while they flow
To the memory of the dead.

Bright as Beauty, newly born,
Blushing at her maiden charms;
Fresh from Ocean rose the Morn,
When the trumpet blew to arms.

Terrible soon grew the light
On the Egyptian battle-plain,
As the darkness of that night
When the eldest born was slain.

Lashed to madness by the wind,
As the Red Sea surges roar,
Leave a gloomy gulf behind,
And devour the shrinking shore;

Thus, with overwhelming pride,
Gallia's brightest, boldest boast,
In a deep and dreadful tide,
Rolled upon the British host.

Dauntless these their station held,
Though with unextinguished ire
Gallia's legions thrice repelled,
Thrice returned through blood and fire.

Thus, above the storms of time,
Towering to the sacred spheres,
Stand the Pyramids sublime, —
Rocks amid the flood of years.

Now the veteran Chief drew nigh,
Conquest towering on his crest,

Valor beaming from his eye,
Pity bleeding in his breast.

Britain saw him thus advance
In her guardian-angel's form;
But he lowered on hostile France,
Like the demon of the storm.

On the whirlwind of the war
High he rode in vengeance dire;
To his friends a leading star,
To his foes consuming fire.

Then the mighty poured their breath,
Slaughter feasted on the brave!
'T was the carnival of death:
'T was the vintage of the grave.

Charged with Abercrombie's doom,
Lightning winged a cruel ball:
'T was the herald of the tomb,
And the hero felt the call, —

Felt, and raised his arm on high;
Victory well the signal knew,
Darted from his awful eye,
And the force of France o'erthrew.

But the horrors of that fight
Were the weeping Muse to tell,
O, 't would cleave the womb of night,
And awake the dead that fell!

Gashed with honorable scars,
 - Low in Glory's lap they lie;
 Though they fell, they fell like stars,
 Streaming splendor through the sky.

* * *

James Montgomery.



Assouan (Syene).

JUVENAL AT SYENE.

HERE at the utmost bound of Roman power,
 Thy prison walls the Arabian Libyan waste,
 Slave over slaves, thy tyrant bade thee cower,
 Even by the soldier's office more disgraced,
 Eating thy indignant heart out through each hour,
 And every drop of Exile's chalice taste.
 Take comfort, noble heart, for while the hand
 Which held thee loosens in the charnel's dust,
 That shameless forehead bears its eternal brand
 Yet in thy living page, and cruelty's lust
 Cut into deathless adamant shall stand,—
 So that Oblivion spare its pitying rust,—
 But thy name, brightening through these Christian years,
 Virtue shall speak it but with grateful tears.

Thomas Gold Appleton.

SYENE.

ONWARD to Ombi,—there to note, as chief,
Its Ptolemaic fane, in pride columnar,
On mound conspicuous at those level shores;
And then to Ultima Thule of Egyptus,
Where commerce, checked by rocky, foaming falls,
In much suspends its course. Syéne this,
Of bold, romantic aspect, rearing up
Amid the waters, — shaggy cliffs around;
With greenest groves of palm and lebbek tree;
Where Nubian girls are seen, unheedfully
Cooling their slender limbs in Nilus' wave.
Syéne — school of science most remote
Of first observatory, temple eke,
Where learned hierophants, star-gazing, dwelt,
Or, at the Solstice, watched their sacred well,
One day illumined by the vertic sun,
Its circled marge by classic foot impressed
Of king and priest, and ancient traveller,
Herodotus, Eudoxus, Manetho sage.
And here the gnomon on that day marks not
At noon the looked-for shadow on the dial.
Here too the quarry from whose womb have sprung,
In tintured granite, carved and polished,
Obelisk, and temple, and colossal form
Spread o'er the face of Egypt's mystic land.
Near, the twin island Elephantiné, —
A sylvan nook one time the seat of kingdom;

With temples and green gardens interspersed,
“Islet of flowers,” so named, and then again,
On, to the rocky isle of Philæ, placed
Below the rushing rapids, in a lake
Serene, translucent, of the river’s bend, —
A swan upon its bosom ! and environed
By granite bluffs fantastic, — where is found
Shaded by palm-groves, that most affluent temple —
To Isis dedicate, in earliest time, —
Joined by the later fane, of triune worship,
To God Osiris, Isis, and their son.

Joseph Ellis.



Cairo.

THE LEGEND OF ST. VITUS.

TO Cairo city, one hot afternoon,
In the midsummer, came an anchorite,
Pale, shrunk as any corpse, thin, lean, and blanched,
From dwelling in the tombs deep from the light :
Tall, gaunt, and wan, across the desert sand
He strode, trampling on avarice ; by his side,
Licking his hands, two dappled panthers paced,
With lolling tongues, and dark and tawny hide.

The gilded domes of Cairo blazed and shone,
The minarets arose like long keen spears
Planted around a sleeping Arab’s tent.

The saint's attendants pricked their spotted ears
When the muezzin, with his droning cry,
Summoned to prayers, and frightened vultures screamed,
Swooping from the gilt roof that glittered in the sky,
Or the tall parapet that o'er it gleamed.

The hermit came to where the traders sat,
Grave turbaned men, weighing out heaps of pearls,
Around a splashing fountain; wafts of myrrh
Rose to the curtained roof in wreathing curls,
And Abyssinian slaves, with sword and bow,
Watched at the doorway, while a dervish danced
In giddy circles, chanting Allah's name,
With long, lean arm outstretched and eyes entranced.

St. Vitus spurned the gold and pearls away,
And struck the dervish silent with a blow
That loosened half his teeth, (the infidel!)
And tossed the censers fiercely to and fro;
Then sang, defiant of the angry men,
"How long, O Lord, how long?" and raised his eyes
To the high heaven, praying God to send
Some proof to them from out those burning skies.

And when their knives flew out, and eunuchs ran,
With steel and bowstring, swift to choke and bleed,
The saint drew forth from underneath his robe
A Nubian flute, carved from a yellow reed;
Then put it to his lips, and music rose,
So wild and wayward that, on either hand,
Straightway perforce the turbaned men began
To whirl and circle like the wind-tossed sand.

And so the saint passed on, until he reached
A mosque, with many domes and cupolas,
And roof hung thick with lamps and ostrich-eggs,
And round the walls a belt of crescent stars.
Towards the Mecca niche the worshippers
Bent altogether in a turbaned row ;
So, seeing this idolatry, the saint
Struck the chief reader twice a sturdy blow.

Then they howled all at once, and many flew,
With sabres drawn, upon the holy man,
To toss him to the dogs. The panthers still
Kept them at bay until the saint began
Upon his flute to breathe his magic tune,
Such as the serpent-charmers use to charm
The sand-asps forth, and straightway priests and flock
Began to circle round ; and free from harm

He glided forth on to the caliph's house,
Where in divan he and the vizier were,
Girt with the council of the rich and wise,
And all the Mullahs who his secrets share.
There he raised up the crucifix on high,
Spat on the Koran, cursed Mohammed's name,
Took the proud caliph's turban from his head,
And threw it to his panthers. Fire and flame

Broke forth around him, as when in a mine
The candle comes unguarded ; swords flashed out
By twenties, and from inner court to court
Ran the alarm, the clamor, and the shout.

The saint, unmoved, drew forth his magic flute
(It was the greatest miracle of all),
And, lo! the soldiers, counsellors, and slaves
Swept dancing, fever-stricken, round the hall.

Round went the caliph with his shaven head,
Round went the vizier, raging as he danced.
Round went the archers, and the sable crew
Tore round in circles, every one entranced
By that sweet mystic music Heaven sent;
Round, round in ceaseless circles, swifter still, —
Till dropped each sword, till dropped each bow unbent.

And then the saint once more into the street
Glided unhurt, and sought the market-place,
Where dates rolled forth from baskets, and the figs
Were purple ripe, and every swarthy face
Was hot with wrangling; and he cursed Mahound
Loud in the midst, and set up there his cross,
O'er the mosque gate, and wailed aloud a psalm, —
“Let God arise, and all his foes confound.”

But the fierce rabble hissed, and throwing stones,
Shouted, “Slay, slay the wretch!” and “Kill, kill,
kill!”

And some seized palm-tree staves and jagged shards;
In every eye there was a murderous will,
Until the saint drew forth again his flute,
And all the people drove to the mad dance,
With nodding heads and never-wearying feet,
And leaden eyes fixed in a magic trance.

And so he left them dancing : one by one
They fell in swoons and fevers, worn and spent.
Then the stern anchorite took his magic flute,
And broke it o'er his knee, and homeward went,
Tossing the useless tube, now split and rent,
Upon the sand ; then through the desert gate
Passed, with his panthers ever him beside ;
And raised his hands to heaven and shouted forth,
“ Amen, amen ! God's name be glorified ! ”

Walter Thornbury.

Damietta.

MARGUERITE OF FRANCE.

WHILST Marguerite, Queen of St. Louis, was besieged by the Turks in Damietta, during the captivity of the king, her husband, she there gave birth to a son, whom she named Tristan, in commemoration of her misfortunes. Information being conveyed to her that the knights intrusted with the defence of the city had resolved on capitulation, she had them summoned to her apartment, and, by her heroic words, so wrought upon their spirits that they vowed to defend her and the Cross to the last extremity.

THE Moslem spears were gleaming
Round Damietta's towers,
Though a Christian banner from her wall
Waved free its lily-flowers.
Ay, proudly did the banner wave,
As queen of earth and air ;
But faint hearts throbbed beneath its folds,
In anguish and despair.

Deep, deep in Paynim dungeon
Their kingly chieftain lay,
And low on many an Eastern field
Their knighthood's best array.
'T was mournful, when at feasts they met,
The wine-cup round to send,
For each that touched it silently
Then missed a gallant friend!

And mournful was their vigil
On the belcaguered wall,
And dark their slumber, dark with dreams
Of slow defeat and fall.
Yet a few hearts of chivalry
Rose high to breast the storm,
And one — of all the loftiest there —
Thrilled in a woman's form.

A woman, meekly bending
O'er the slumber of her child,
With her soft sad eyes of weeping love,
As the Virgin Mother's mild.
O, roughly cradled was thy babe,
Midst the clash of spear and lance,
And a strange, wild bower was thine, young Queen,
Fair Marguerite of France!

A dark and vaulted chamber,
Like a scene for wizard-spell,
Deep in the Saracenic gloom
Of the warrior citadel;

And there midst arms the couch was spread,
And with banners curtained o'er,
For the daughter of the minstrel land,
The gay Provençal shore!

For the bright Queen of St. Louis,
The star of court and hall!
But the deep strength of the gentle heart,
Wakes to the tempest's call!
Her lord was in the Paynim's hold,
His soul with grief oppressed,
Yet calmly lay the desolate,
With her young babe on her breast!

There were voices in the city,
Voices of wrath and fear, —
"The walls grow weak, the strife is vain,
We will not perish here!
Yield! yield! and let the crescent gleam
O'er tower and bastion high!
Our distant homes are beautiful, —
We stay not here to die!"

They bore those fearful tidings
To the sad queen where she lay, —
They told a tale of wavering hearts,
Of treason and dismay:
The blood rushed through her pearly cheek,
The sparkle to her eye, —
"Now call me hither those recreant knights
From the bands of Italy!"

Then through the vaulted chambers
Stern iron footsteps rang,
And heavily the sounding floor
Gave back the sabre's clang.
They stood around her, — steel-clad men,
Moulded for storm and fight,
But they quailed before the loftier soul
In that pale aspect bright.

Yes, as before the falcon shrinks
The bird of meaner wing,
So shrank they from the imperial glance
Of her, — that fragile thing!
And her flute-like voice rose clear and high,
Through the din of arms around,
Sweet, and yet stirring to the soul,
As a silver clarion's sound.

“The honor of the Lily
Is in your hands to keep,
And the banner of the Cross, for Him
Who died on Calvary's steep:
And the city which for Christian prayer
Hath heard the holy bell, —
And is it these your hearts would yield
To the godless infidel?”

“Then bring me here a breastplate,
And a helm, before ye fly,
And I will gird my woman's form,
And on the ramparts die!”

And the boy whom I have borne for woe,
But never for disgrace,
Shall go within mine arms to death
Meet for his royal race.

“Look on him as he slumbers
In the shadow of the lance!
Then go, and with the Cross forsake
The princely babe of France!
But tell your homes ye left one heart
To perish undefiled;
A woman and a queen, to guard
Her honor and her child!”

Before her words they thrilled, like leaves
When winds are in the wood;
And a deepening murmur told of men
Roused to a loftier mood.
And her babe awoke to flashing swords,
Unsheathed in many a hand,
As they gathered round the helpless one,
Again a noble band!

“We are thy warriors, lady!
True to the Cross and thee!
The spirit of thy kindling word
On every sword shall be!
Rest, with thy fair child on thy breast,
Rest, — we will guard thee well:
St. Denis for the lily-flower,
And the Christian citadel!”

Felicia Hemans.

Ensené (Antinoë).

ANTINOÛS.

THE oracle at Besa declared that a great danger threatened Adrian, unless some person very dear to him should offer his life in propitiation. Antinoûs, a favorite of the Emperor, on hearing this, threw himself into the Nile as an offering. To his memory Adrian built the city of Antinoë.

EVEN nigh the golden furnace of a throne,
 Flower-like thy loyalty and noble heart
 Could live unwithered, and thy better part
 The canker of low selfishness disown,
 Losing itself hid in another's love.
 And when commanding Fate said "for thy friend
 Give what he prizes most," — all fear above,
 Or thought that death such intercourse should end,
 Thy life thou gavest like some common thing.
 Shaming all else, and never to forget
 The place of sacrifice, the lonely king
 Beside the fatal wave a city set
 Commemorative, which ruin but endears,
 And thy name lives there whispered through our tears.

Thomas Gold Appleton.

Gheezeh (Gizeh).

GIZEH.

LO! towards the west, where skies are blue and clear,
 Their bald, dark heads what giant structures rear?
 High o'er the Nile, and Gizeh's waste of sand,

They look around, dread guardians of the land.
Stupendous works of Mizraim's early kings!
Where Time hath dropped his scythe and furled his
wings,

The hoary god for ages standing by,
Watching their unchanged summits pierce the sky,
As nearer Gizeli's wondrous piles we draw,
What stirs within us? — sadness bleent with awe:
To gaze above, their massy outlines trace,
To lean, a less than pygmy, at their base;
To muse on that vast crowd, in other years
Worn with their toil, and weeping slavery's tears,
That one man's mortal frame might brave decay,
One tyrant's memory should not pass away.
How fills the soul with thoughts too deep for words!
How dark a scene the pictured past affords!
But while we mourn the follies of our kind,
How glorious seems all-conquering, daring mind!
These piles at once grand, matchless, and sublime,
Yet proofs of darkness, monuments of crime?

O'er Libya's hills the Day-god sinks once more,
Brightly as when their crowns the Pharaohs wore;
Sweet, too, as then, red-mantled Evening throws
O'er Egypt's vale the spell of rich repose;
Soft glides and dimples 'neath the sunset smile
The stream of ruins, ancient, storied Nile:
On painted tomb, and crumbling city's site,
Falls, like a shower of gold, the mellow light.
But brightest here the farewell splendors beam;
From pile to pile the lines of glory stream.

Up from the desert shoot the quivering rays ;
 No cloud, no mist, relieves that living blaze.
 The horizon burns like some vast funeral pyre ;
 Each towering pyramid seems capped with fire.
 But brief that glory, — one by one away
 Fade the red beams ; now softer colors play,
 Pale rose-hues quivering down each structure's side,
 Till deepening shadows veil their pomp and pride.

* * *

The pyramids, the tombs, — Death's Stygian bowers,
 Ungraced by yews, unbeautified by flowers,
 That crowd the desert sands where, race on race,
 Men toiled, laughed, wept, then made their resting-
 place.

The sphinx, like some vast thing of monstrous birth,
 Begot by mountains of the laboring earth,
 Or darkly heaved from Pluto's realms below,
 Save that too sweet those Ethiop features glow,
 Too sadly calm, majestic, and benign,
 To image aught but attributes divine.

Nicholas Michell.



Heliopolis (Mataria).

HELIOPOLIS.

NEXT Heliopolis, City of the Sun, —
 A shattered sepulchre, a wreck of shrines !
 Here Cæsar, zealous, " This must we survey ;
 The hallowed spot where Plato and Eudoxus

Conceived new thoughts, — where Moses, legislator,
 Derived his wisdom to instruct mankind, —
 Moses, prime leader of a tribe heroic,
 Who told of heaven and earth, in godlike words.
 This city first-named On, whence Joseph took,
 For wife, the high-priest's daughter, Asenath ;
 Whence later Baruch, Jeremiah sang.
 This seat of learning where sage Manetho wrote,
 Which fostered Solon and Pythagoras,
 Where sometime dwelt sublime Euripides.”
 So saw he vestiges of those grand temples
 Built to the Sun-god Re ; and obelisks,
 Ancient when seen by Moses and by Plato, —
 Transported now to European shores.

Joseph Ellis.



Ipsamboul (Abu-Simbel), Nubia.

IPSAMBOUL.

IPSAMBOUL! — name that wakens wonder's thrill, —
 Why stand ye, spell-bound, near yon sculptured hill?
 High o'er the flowing Nile the temples frown,
 Their monster guardians gazing dimly down,
 Those awful forms that seem with being rife,
 Primeval giants starting into life!
 Beside those limbs how pygmy-like are we!
 'T is toil and pain to climb the statue's knee:
 See the broad breast like some vast buttress spread,

High as a war-tower springs the huge capped head.
What were they, mighty ones, dark Titan band,
Shaped to this awful guise by human hand?
The forms of heroes conquering once the world,
Or types of gods from heaven's high regions hurled?
Yet in those lofty features naught appears
To shock the gazer's heart, or wake his fears;
Calm and benign, they front the rising sun,
How oft the burning orb his course hath run,
Lighting to million graves the human race,
But, still returning, sees each solemn face!

Nicholas Michell.

ABU SIMBEL.

THIS is the shrine of Silence, sunk and hewn
Deep in the solid rock: its pillars rise
From floor to roof, like giants, with fixed eyes
And palms crossed on their breasts; e'en at mid-noon
A dim light falls around, as though the moon
Were peering at the temple from the skies.
The foot falls soundless on the sand, that lies
A carpet by long centuries thick-strewn.
The mighty shapes that guard the solemn pile,
Unburied, after ages, from the tomb
Heaped on them by the blast of the simoom,
Sit at the portal, gazing, night and day,
O'er the lone desert, stretching far away,
And on the eternal flood of Father Nile.

John Bruce Norton.

Karnak.

KARNAK.

SO, with a troop of friends and Theban slaves,
Led by an aged hierophant, well-versed
In mystic records of Egyptus' land,
And hierogrammat of linguistic skill, —
Cæsar went forth, in sober merriment,
To view the skeletons of ages fled, —
The giant bones, denoting giant minds;
Those unexampled temples sempitern —
Luxor and Karnak, twain, yet linked in one
By avenue of sphinxes, multiplied,
To endless view; — and first to Luxor, built
By Amunothph; passing through the propylon huge,
Prefaced by two tall obelisks, and two
Gigantic figures human-form; beyond,
The temple-tomb of Ozymandias,
And countless gaunt mementos of the past.
But when, mid lines of sphinx and obelisk,
To Karnak Cæsar came, he said, amazed,
“Too wonderful this vision to be real, —
The work of necromancy, or a dream!
This grand confusion, these colossal forms,
This wide extent of ruin; how could die
Men who had life for this? they could not die;
Fate fails to cast them to oblivion; —
Here in their deeds they live; these silent walls,

These graven monoliths, with meaning rife,
These prostrate statues, and these columns stark,
Speak, from remotest time, to us who live.

Joseph Ellis.



Memphis.

MEMPHIS.

BUT now famed Memphis' ancient bounds are gained,
Where the long line of iron Pharaohs reigned.
Hallowed by sacred lore, these scenes impart
A speechless awe, yet interest to the heart.
Here exiled Joseph rose to wealth and fame,
And, bent with years, the trembling Israel came.
Yonder in Goshen toiled, with many a sigh,
His countless sons, and mourned for days gone by;
And far away, where sweeps the Red Sea shore,
Lies the long track their myriads hurried o'er,
When blazed the fiery cloud o'er mount and plain,
And midnight winds rolled back the subject main,
While Moses led them on with wand of might,
Saw Pharaoh's host, nor trembled at the sight.

But Memphis' kings are less than ashes now,
The crowns e'en dust, that decked each royal brow.
Goshen, where Israel toiled, no trace retains
Of all the towers they built, when scourged in chains.
Memphis herself, as cursed for injuries piled

On Judah's head, long, long hath strewn the wild.
Where is the shrine to soft-eyed Apis reared,
That sacred bull, kings, blood-stained chiefs revered?
Where Vulcan's fane? and, gorgeous as a dream,
The gold-roofed palace raised by Nilus' stream?
No vestige meets the pilgrim's curious gaze;
O'er Memphis' site the turbaned robber strays;
Each wall is razed, each pillared shrine o'erthrown;
The sands drift on, the desert breezes moan;
Shades of the Pharaohs! rise from marble sleep!
And o'er your lost loved city bend and weep!

Nicholas Michell.



Meroë, Nubia.

MEROË.

FAR down in Nubia's waste gray temples stand,
Tottering with age, each doorway choked with sand;
And further on, in groups against the sky,
Long lines of pyramids ascend on high,
By all forsaken, save by beasts of prey,
And that dark bird, a god in ancient day,
Whose voice still sounds, as shadowy twilight falls,
Like a ghost's wail along those lonely walls.
And here stood Ethiop's city, once arrayed
In power and pomp, that sun-bright Afrie swayed;
Here Ammon first bade listening nations quail,
And Isis wore her dim mysterious veil —

Home of young Learning! cradle of each art!
 Where keen Discovery traced her mazy chart,—
 Land, far and wide, that sent adventurers forth,
 Peopled the South, refined the savage North,
 Launched her bold pilots o'er the Indian wave,
 And placed her gods in many a temple cave.

Nicholas Michell.

Nile, the River.

HYMN TO THE NILE.

THIS hymn is important as bearing witness to the state of religious thought in Egypt in the time of Merneptah, the son of Rameses II. XIXth dynasty, according to the generality of Egyptologists, contemporary with Moses.

HAIL to thee, O Nile!
 Thou shewest thyself in this land,
 Coming in peace, giving life to Egypt:
 O Ammon, thou leadest night unto day,
 A leading that rejoices the heart!
 Overflowing the gardens created by Ra.
 Giving life to all animals;
 Watering the land without ceasing:
 The way of heaven descending:
 Lover of food, bestower of corn,
 Giving light to every home, O Ptah!

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Bringer of food! Great Lord of provisions!
 Creator of all good things!

Lord of terrors and of choicest joys !
All are combined in him.
He produceth grass for the oxen ;
Providing victims for every god.
The choice incense is that which he supplies.
Lord in both regions,
He filleth the granaries, enricheth the storehouses,
He careth for the state of the poor.

He causeth growth to fulfil all desires,
He never wearies of it.
He maketh his might a buckler.
He is not graven in marble,
As an image bearing the double crown.
He is not beheld :
He hath neither ministrants nor offerings :
He is not adored in sanctuaries :
His abode is not known :
No shrine is found with painted figures.

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The inundation comes, then cometh rejoicing ;
Every heart exulteth :
The tooth of the crocodiles, the children of Neith
Even the circle of the gods who are counted with thee.
Doth not its outburst water the fields,
Overcoming mortals with joy :
Watering one to produce another.
There is none who worketh with him ;
He produces food without the aid of Neith.
Mortals he causes to rejoice.

He giveth light on his coming from darkness :
In the pastures of his cattle
His might produceth all :
What was not, his moisture bringeth to life.
Men are clothed to fill his gardens :
He careth for his laborers.
He maketh even and noontide,
He is the infinite Ptah and Kabes.
He createth all works therein,
All writings, all sacred words,
All his implements in the North.

* * *

O inundation of Nile, offerings are made to thee;
Oxen are slain to thee;
Great festivals are kept for thee;
Fowls are sacrificed to thee;
Beasts of the field are caught for thee;
Pure flames are offered to thee;
Offerings are made to every god,
As they are made unto Nile.
Incense ascends unto heaven,
Oxen, bulls, fowls are burnt !
Nile makes for himself chasms in the Thebaid ;
Unknown is his name in heaven,
He doth not manifest his forms !
Vain are all representations !

Mortals extol him, and the cycle of gods !
Awe is felt by the terrible ones ;
His son is made Lord of all,
To enlighten all Egypt.

Shine forth, shine forth, O Nile ! shine forth !
Giving life to men by his oxen :
Giving life to his oxen by the pastures !
Shine forth in glory, O Nile.

From the Egyptian of Enna. Tr. F. C. Cook.

THE NILE.

A LAND far distant, where the tawny race
Dwell near the fountains of the sun, and where
The Nigris pours his dusky waters ; wind
Along his banks, till thou shalt reach the fall
Where from the mountains with papyrus crowned
The venerable Nile impetuous pours
His headlong torrent ; he shall guide thy steps
To those irriguous plains, whose triple sides
His arms surround.

Æschylus. Tr. R. Potter.

THE NILE.

KNOW then, to all those stars, by nature driven
In opposition to revolving heaven,
Some one peculiar influence was given.
The sun the seasons of the year supplies,
And bids the evening and the morning rise ;
Commands the planets with superior force,
And keeps each wandering light to his appointed course.
The silver moon o'er briny seas presides,
And heaves huge ocean with alternate tides.

Saturn's cold rays in icy climes prevail;
Mars rules the winds, the storm, and rattling hail;
Where Jove ascends, the skies are still serene;
And fruitful Venus is the genial queen;
While every limpid spring and falling stream
Submits to radiant Hermes' reigning beam.
When in the Crab the humid ruler shines,
And to the sultry Lion near inclines,
There fixed immediate o'er Nile's latent source,
He strikes the watery stores with ponderous force;
Nor can the flood bright Maia's son withstand,
But heaves, like ocean at the moon's command;
His waves ascend, obedient as the seas,
And reach their destined height by just degrees.
Nor to its bank returns the enormous tide,
Till Libra's equal scales the days and nights divide.
Antiquity, unknowing and deceived,
In dreams of Ethiopian snows believed:
From hills they taught, how melting currents ran,
When the first swelling of the flood began.
But ah, how vain the thought! no Boreas there
In icy bonds constrains the wintry year,
But sultry southern winds eternal rain,
And scorching suns the swarthy natives stain.
Yet more, whatever flood the frost congeals,
Melts as the genial spring's return he feels;
While Nile's redundant waters never rise,
Till the hot Dog inflames the summer skies;
Nor to his banks his shrinking stream confines,
Till high in heaven the autumnal balance shines.
Unlike his watery brethren he presides,

And by new laws his liquid empire guides.
From dropping seasons no increase he knows,
Nor feels the fleecy showers of melting snows.
His river swells not idly, ere the land
The timely office of his waves demand;
But knows his lot, by providence assigned,
To cool the season, and refresh mankind,
When'er the Lion sheds his fires around,
And Cancer burns Syene's parching ground;
Then, at the prayer of nations, comes the Nile,
And kindly tempers up the mouldering soil.
Nor from the plains the covering God retreats,
Till the rude fervor of the skies abates;
Till Phæbus into milder autumn fades,
And Meroë projects her lengthening shades.
Nor let inquiring sceptics ask the cause,
'Tis Jove's command, and these are nature's laws.

Others of old, as vainly too, have thought
By western winds the spreading deluge brought;
While at fixed times, for many a day, they last,
Possess the skies, and drive a constant blast;
Collected clouds united zephyrs bring,
And shed huge rains from many a dropping wing,
To heave the flood, and swell the abounding spring.
Or when the airy brethren's steadfast force
Resists the rushing current's downward course,
Backward he rolls indignant, to his head:
While o'er the plains his heapy waves are spread.

Some have believed, that spacious channels go
Through the dark entrails of the earth below;
Through these, by turns, revolving rivers pass,

And secretly pervade the mighty mass;
Through these the sun, when from the north he flies,
And cuts the glowing Ethiopic skies,
From distant streams attracts their liquid stores,
And through Nile's spring the assembled waters pours:
Till Nile, o'erburdened, disembogues the load,
And spews the foamy deluge all abroad.

Sages there have been, too, who long maintained
That ocean's waves through porous earth are drained;
'Tis thence their saltness they no longer keep,
By slow degrees still freshening as they creep;
Till at a period Nile receives them all,
And pours them loosely spreading, as they fall.

The stars, and sun himself, as some have said,
By exhalations from the deep are fed;
And when the golden ruler of the day
Through Cancer's fiery sign pursues his way,
His beams attract too largely from the sea;
The refuse of his draughts the nights return,
And more than fill the Nile's capacious urn.

Were I the dictates of my soul to tell,
And speak the reasons of the watery swell,
To Providence the task I should assign,
And find the cause in workmanship divine.
Less streams we trace, unerring, to their birth,
And know the parent earth which brought them forth:
While this, as early as the world begun,
Ran thus and must continue thus to run;
And still unfathomed by our search, shall own
No cause, but Jove's commanding will alone.

Nor, Cæsar, is thy search of knowledge strange:

Well may thy boundless soul desire to range,
Well may she strive Nile's fountain to explore ;
Since mighty kings have sought the same before ;
Each for the first discoverer would be known,
And hand, to future times, the secret down ;
But still their powers were exercised in vain,
While latent Nature mocked their fruitless pain.
Philip's great son, whom Memphis still records,
The chief of her illustrious sceptred lords,
Sent, of his own, a chosen number forth,
To trace the wondrous stream's mysterious birth.
Through Ethiopia's plains they journeyed on,
Till the hot sun opposed the burning zone :
There, by the God's resistless beams repelled,
An unbeginning stream they still beheld.
Fierce came Sesostris from the eastern dawn,
On his proud car by captive monarchs drawn ;
His lawless will, impatient of a bound,
Commanded Nile's hid fountain to be found :
But sooner much the tyrant might have known
Thy famed Hesperian Po, or Gallic Rhone.
Cambyzes, too, his daring Persians led,
Where hoary age makes white the Ethiop's head ;
Till sore distressed and destitute of food,
He stained his hungry jaws with human blood ;
Till half his host the other half devoured,
And left the Nile behind them unexplored.

Of thy forbidden head, thou sacred stream,
Nor fiction dares to speak, nor poets dream.
Through various nations roll thy waters down,
By many seen, though still by all unknown ;

No land presumes to claim thee for her own.
For me, my humble tale no more shall tell,
Than what our just records demonstrate well;
Than God, who bade thee thus mysterious flow,
Permits the narrow mind of man to know.

Far in the south the daring waters rise,
As in disdain of Cancer's burning skies;
Thence with a downward course, they seek the main,
Direct against the lazy northern wain;
Unless when, partially, thy winding tide
Turns to the Libyan or Arabian side.
The distant Seres first behold thee flow;
Nor yet thy spring the distant Seres know.
Midst sooty Ethiops next, thy current roams;
The sooty Ethiops wonder whence it comes:
Nature conceals thy infant stream with care,
Nor lets thee, but in majesty, appear.
Upon thy banks astonished nations stand,
Nor dare assign thy rise to one peculiar land.
Exempt from vulgar laws thy waters run,
Nor take their various seasons from the sun;
Though high in heaven the fiery solstice stand,
Obedient winter comes, at thy command.
From pole to pole thy boundless waves extend;
One never knows thy rise, nor one thy end.
By Meroë thy stream divided roves,
And winds encircling round her ebony groves;
Of sable hue the costly timbers stand,
Dark as the swarthy natives of the land:
Yet, though tall woods in wide abundance spread,
Their leafy tops afford no friendly shade;

So vertically shine the solar rays,
And from the Lion dart the downward blaze.
From thence, through deserts dry, thou journey'st on,
Nor shrink'st, diminished by the torrid zone,
Strong in thyself, collected, full, and one.
Anon, thy streams are parcelled o'er the plain,
Anon the scattered currents meet again;
Jointly they flow, where Philæ's gates divide
Our fertile Egypt from Arabia's side;
Thence, with a peaceful, soft descent, they creep,
And seek, insensibly, the distant deep;
Till through seven mouths the famous flood is lost,
On the last limits of our Pharian coast;
Where Gaza's isthmus rises, to restrain
The Erythræan from the midland main.
Who that beholds thee, Nile! thus gently flow,
With scarce a wrinkle on thy glassy brow,
Can guess thy rage, when rocks resist thy force,
And hurl thee headlong in thy downward course;
When spouting cararacts thy torrents pour,
And nations tremble at the deafening roar;
When thy proud waves with indignation rise,
And dash their foamy fury to the skies?
These wonders reedy Abatos can tell,
And the tall cliffs that first declare thy swell;
The cliffs with ignorance of old believed
Thy parent veins, and for thy spring received.
From thence huge mountains Nature's hand provides,
To bank thy too luxurious river's sides;
As in a vale thy current she restrains,
Nor suffers thee to spread the Libyan plains:

At Memphis, first, free liberty she yields,
And lets thee loose to float the thirsty fields.

Lucan. Tr. N. Rowe.

THE NILE.

THE Nile now calls us, pride of Egypt's plains :
T Sole stream on earth its boundaries that o'erflows
Punctual, and scatters plenty. When the year
Now glows with perfect summer, leaps its tide
Broad o'er the champaign, for the north-wind now,
The Etesian breeze, against its mouth direct
Blows with perpetual winnow ; every surge
Hence loiters slow, the total current swells,
And wave o'er wave its loftiest bank surmounts.
For that the fixed monsoon that now prevails
Flows from the cold stars of the northern pole
None e'er can doubt ; while rolls the Nile adverse
Full from the south, from realms of torrid heat,
Haunts of the Ethiop-tribes ; yet far beyond
First bubbling, distant, o'er the burning line.

Then ocean, haply, by the undevious breeze
Blown up its channel, heaves with every wave
Heaps of high sands, and dams its wonted course :
Whence narrower, too, its exit to the main,
And with less force the tardy stream descends.

Or, towards its fountain, ampler rains, perchance.
Fall, as the Etesian fans, now wide unfurled,
Ply the big clouds perpetual from the north
Far o'er the red equator ; where, condensed,
Ponderous, and low, against the hills they strike,

And shed their treasures o'er the rising flood.
 Or, from the Ethiop-mountains, the bright sun
 Now full matured, with deep dissolving ray
 May melt the agglomerate snows, and down the plains
 Drive them, augmenting, hence, the incipient stream.

Lucretius. Tr. J. M. Good.

TO THE NILE.

SON of the old moon-mountains African!
 Stream of the pyramid and crocodile!
 We call thee fruitful, and that very while
 A desert fills our seeing's inward span:
 Nurse of swart nations since the world began,
 Art thou so fruitful? or dost thou beguile
 Those men to honor thee, who, worn with toil,
 Rest them a space 'twixt Cairo and Decan?
 O, may dark fancies err! They surely do;
 'Tis ignorance that makes a barren waste
 Of all beyond itself. Thou dost bedew
 Green rushes like our rivers, and dost taste
 The pleasant sunrise. Green isles hast thou too,
 And to the sea as happily dost haste.

John Keats.

THE NILE.

IT flows through old hushed Egypt and its sands,
 Like some grave mighty thought threading a dream,
 And times and things, as in that vision, seem
 Keeping along it their eternal stands,—

Caves, pillars, pyramids, the shepherd bands
That roamed through the young world, the glory extreme

Of high Sesostris, and that southern beam,
The laughing queen that caught the world's great hands.
Then comes a mightier silence, stern and strong,
As of a world left empty of its throng,
And the void weighs on us: and then we wake,
And hear the fruitful stream lapsing along
'Twixt villages, and think how we shall take
Our own calm journey on for human sake.

Leigh Hunt.

OZYMANDIAS.

I MET a traveller from an antique land
Who said, "Two vast and trunkless legs of stone
Stand in the desert. Near them, on the sand,
Half sunk, a shattered visage lies, whose frown,
And wrinkled lip, and sneer of cold command,
Tell that its sculptor well those passions read
Which yet survive, stamped on these lifeless things,
The hand that mocked them and the heart that fed;
And on the pedestal these words appear:
'My name is Ozymandias, king of kings:
Look on my works, ye mighty, and despair!'
Nothing beside remains. Round the decay
Of that colossal wreck, boundless and bare,
The lone and level sands stretch far away."

Percy Bysshe Shelley.

A SUNSET ON THE NILE.

PAST emerald plains and furrowed mountains old,
Whose violet gorges snare the wandering eye,
The pillared palms day's dying embers hold,
Like shafts of bronze against the crimson sky,
And every cloud mirrors its rosy fold
In tremulous waves which blush and wander by —
We float, and feel the magic penetrate,
Till all our soul is colored by the hues,
Making a heaven of earth, and, satiate
With splendor, we forego the use
Of speech, and reverently wait
While fades the glory with the falling dews,
And darkness seals for memory each gleam,
Happy to know it was not all a dream.

Thomas Gold Appleton.

MEMNON.

METHOUGHT I lived three thousand years ago,
Somewhere in Egypt, near a pyramid ;
And in my dream I heard black Memnon playing :
He stood twelve cubits high, and, with a voice
Like thunder when it breaks on hollow shores,
Called on the sky, which answered. Then he awoke
His marble music, and with grave sweet sounds
Enchanted from her chamber the coy Dawn.
He sang, too, — oh, such songs ! Silence, who lay
Torpid upon those wastes of level sand,

Stirred and grew human; from its shuddering reeds
Stole forth the crocodile, and birds of blood
Hung listening in the rich and burning air.

Bryan Waller Procter.

MOSES ON THE NILE.

SLOW glides the Nile; amid the margin-flags
Closed in a bulrush-ark the babe is left, —
Left by a mother's hand. His sister waits
Far off; and pale, 'tween hope and fear, beholds
The royal maid, surrounded by her train,
Approach the river-bank; approach the spot
Where sleeps the innocent. She sees them stoop
With meeting plumes: the rushy lid is oped,
And wakes the infant, smiling in his tears, —
As when along a little mountain lake
The summer south-wind breathes a gentle sigh,
And parts the reeds, unveiling, as they bend,
A water-lily floating on the wave.

James Grahame.

THE TRAVELLER AT THE SOURCE OF THE NILE.

IN sunset's light, o'er Afric thrown,
A wanderer proudly stood
Beside the well-spring, deep and lone,
Of Egypt's awful flood, —
The cradle of that mighty birth,
So long a hidden thing to earth!

He heard its life's first murmuring sound,
A low, mysterious tone, —
A music sought, but never found
By kings and warriors gone.
He listened, — and his heart beat high:
That was the song of victory!

The rapture of a conqueror's mood
Rushed burning through his frame,
The depths of that green solitude
Its torrents could not tame;
Though stillness lay, with eve's last smile,
Round those far fountains of the Nile.

Night came with stars. Across his soul
There swept a sudden change:
E'en at the pilgrim's glorious goal,
A shadow dark and strange
Breathed from the thought, so swift to fall
O'er triumph's hour, — and is this all?

No more than this! What seemed it now
First by that spring to stand;
A thousand streams of lovelier flow
Bathed his own mountain land!
Whence, far o'er waste and ocean track,
Their wild, sweet voices called him back.

They called him back to many a glade,
His childhood's haunt of play,
Where brightly through the beechen shade
Their waters glanced away;

They called him, with their sounding waves,
Back to his father's hills and graves.

But, darkly mingling with the thought
Of each familiar scene,
Rose up a fearful vision, fraught
With all that lay between, —
The Arab's lance, the desert's bloom,
The whirling sands, the red simoom!

Where was the glow of power and pride?
The spirit born to roam?
His altered heart within him died
With yearnings for his home!
All vainly struggling to repress
That gush of painful tenderness.

He wept! The stars of Afric's heaven
Beheld his bursting tears,
E'en on that spot where fate had given
The meed of toiling years!
O Happiness! how far we flee
Thine own sweet paths in search of thee!

Felicia Hemans.

THE NILE.

O THOU beneficent and bounteous stream!
Thou patriarch river! on whose ample breast
We dwelt the time that full at once could seem
Of busiest travel and of softest rest:

No wonder that thy being was so blest
That gratitude of old to worship grew,
That as a living god thou wert addrest,
And to itself the immediate agent drew
To one creative power the feelings only due.

For in thy title and in Nature's truth
Thou art and makest Egypt: were thy source
But once arrested in its bubbling youth,
Or turned extravagant to some new course,
By a fierce crisis of convulsive force,
Egypt would cease to be,—the intrusive sand
Would smother its rich fields without remorse,
And scarce a solitary palm could stand
To tell, that barren vale was once the wealthiest land.

Scarce with more certain order waves the Sun
His matin banners in the eastern sky,
Than at the reckoned period are begun
Thy operations of fertility:
Through the long sweep thy bosom swelling high
Expands between the sandy mountain chains,
The walls of Libya and of Araby,
Till in the active virtue it contains
The desert bases sink and rise prolific plains.

See through the naked length no blade of grass,
No animate sign, relieves the dismal strand,
Such it might seem our orb's first substance was,
Ere touched by God with generative hand;
Yet at one step we reach the teeming land,

Lying fresh-green beneath the scorching sun,
As succulent as if at its command
It held all rains that fall, all brooks that run,
And this, O generous Nile! is thy vast benison.

Whence comest thou, so marvellously dowered
As never other stream on earth beside?
Where are thy founts of being, thus empowered
To form a nation by thy annual tide?
The charts are silent; history guesses wide;
Adventure from thy quest returns ashamed;
And each new age, in its especial pride,
Believes that it shall be as that one named,
In which to all mankind thy birthplace was proclaimed.

Though priests upon thy banks, mysterious water!
Races of men in lofty knowledge schooled,
Though warriors, winning fame through shock and
slaughter,
Sesostris to Napoleon, here have ruled:
Yet has the secret of thy sources fooled
The monarch's strength, the labors of the wise,
And, though the world's desire has never cooled,
Our practised vision little more desecies
Than old Herodotus beheld with simple eyes.

And now in Egypt's late degraded day,
A veneration love attends thee still,
And the poor fellah, from thee torn away,
Feels a strange yearning his rude bosom fill;
Like the remembered show of lake and hill,

That wrings the Switzer's soul, though fortune smile,
Thy mirage haunts him, uncontrolled by will,
And wealth or war in vain the heart beguile
That clings to its mud-hut and palms beside the Nile.
Lord Houghton.

A TRAVELLER'S IMPRESSION ON THE NILE.

WHEN you have lain for weeks together
On such a noble river's breast,
And learnt its face in every weather,
And loved its motions and its rest, —

'Tis hard at some appointed place
To check your course and turn your prow,
And objects for themselves retrace
You past with added hope just now.

The silent highway forward beckons,
And all the bars that reason plants
Now disappointed fancy reckons
As foolish fears or selfish wants.

The very rapids, rocks, and shoals
Seem but temptations which the stream
Holds out to energetic souls,
That worthy of its love may seem.

But life is full of limits; heed not
One more or less, — the forward track
May often give you what you need not,
While wisdom waits on turning back.

Lord Houghton.

TO THE NILE.

MYSTERIOUS flood, — that through the silent sands
Hast wandered, century on century,
Watering the length of green Egyptian lands,
Which were not, but for thee, —

Art thou the keeper of that eldest lore,
Written ere yet thy hieroglyphs began,
When dawned upon thy fresh, untrampled shore
The earliest life of man?

Thou guardest temple and vast pyramid,
Where the gray Past records its ancient speech;
But in thine unrevealing breast lies hid
What they refuse to teach.

All other streams with human joys and fears
Run blended, o'er the plains of History:
Thou tak'st no note of man; a thousand years
Are as a day to thee.

What were to thee the Osirian festivals?
Or Memnon's music on the Theban plain?
The carnage, when Cambyses made thy halls
Ruddy with royal slain?

Even then thou wast a God, and shrines were built
For worship of thine own majestic flood;
For thee the incense burned, — for thee was spilt
The sacrificial blood.

And past the bannered pylons that arose
Above thy palms, the pageantry and state,
Thy current flowed, calmly as now it flows,
Unchangeable as fate.

Thou givest blessing as a god might give,
Whose being is his bounty: from the slime
Shaken from off thy skirts the nations live,
Through all the years of Time.

In thy solemnity, thine awful calm,
Thy grand indifference of Destiny,
My soul forgets its pain, and drinks the balm
Which thou dost proffer me.

Thy godship is unquestioned still: I bring
No doubtful worship to thy shrine supreme;
But thus my homage as a chaplet fling,
To float upon thy stream!

Bayard Taylor.

THE AWAKENER IN THE DESERT.

BESIDE the Nile, mid desert sands,
A royal-looking lion stands,
As yellow as the sand he treads,
Or the Simoom that round him spreads.

A royal mantle's shaggy train
Waves round his breast, his ample mane;

A royal crown of passing show,
His stiff hair, bristles on his brow.

He lifts his head and roars amain;
So wild and hollow is the strain,
It booms along the desert sand
And shakes the flood on Mæris' strand.

Stiffens the panther's roseate hide,
The fleet gazelle flies terrified;
Camel and crocodile ashore
List to the monarch's angry roar.

Its echoes from the Nile rebound,
The Pyramids fling back the sound,
The royal mummy, brown and weary,
It wakes from out his slumbers dreary.

He rises in his narrow shrine,
"Thanks, Lion, for that roar of thine!
Thousands of years in sleep I've passed,
Awoke by thy loud roar at last.

"Long time I've dreamed away, ah me!
Years fringed with splendor, where are ye?
When victory's banners round me flew,
Lion, thy sires my chariot drew.

"High on a golden car I rolled,
Its pole was bright with burnished gold,
And spokes and wheels with pearls did shine;
• The town of a hundred gates was mine.

“This foot-sole too, now dry and spare,
Trode on the black Moor’s matted hair,
On Indian’s yellow brow was placed,
On necks of children of the waste.

“And this right hand once swayed the world,
Now with stiff byssus close enfurled;
What yonder hieroglyphics tell
This bosom bore and knew full well.

The tomb that now enshrines me here,
With my own hand I helped to rear;
I sat upon the spear-girt throne,
My steward made the brickfields groan.

“My subject, the broad-bosomed Nile,
Rocked me on rapid keel awhile;
Long have I lain in deep repose,
The Nile-stream yet as ever flows.

“While I its Lord —” He said no more,
Ceased had the Desert Wakener’s roar,
And sank again the monarch’s head
Down in the silence of the dead.

Ferdinand Freiligrath. Tr. G. E. Shirley.

NAPOLEON IN BIVOUAC.

A WATCH-FIRE on a sandy waste —
Two trenches — arms in stack —
A pyramid of bayonets —
Napoleon’s bivouac!

Yonder the stately grenadiers
Of Kleber's vanguard see!
The general to inspect them sits —
Close by the blaze sits he.

Upon his weary knee the chart,
There, by the glowing heap,
Softly the mighty Bonaparte
Sinks, like a child to sleep.

And stretched on cloak and cannon,
His soldiers, too, sleep well,
And, leaning on his musket, nods
The very sentinel.

Sleep on, ye weary warriors, sleep!
Sleep out your last hard fight!
Mute, shadowy sentinels shall keep
Watch round your trench to-night.

Let Murad's horsemen dash along!
Let man and steed come on!
To guard your line stalks many a strong
And stalwart Champion.

A Mede stands guard, who with you rode
When you from Thebes marched back,
Who after King Cambyses strode,
Hard in his chariot's track.

A stately Macedonian
Stands sentry by your line,

Who saw on Ammon's plain the crown
Of Alexander shine.

And, lo ! another spectre !
Old Nile has known him well ;
An Admiral of Cæsar's fleet,
Who under Cæsar fell.

The graves of earth's old lords, who sleep
Beneath the desert-sands,
Send forth their dead, his guard to keep,
Who now the world commands.

They stir, they wake, their places take
Around the midnight flame ;
The sand and mould I see them shake
From many a mail-clad frame.

I see the ancient armor gleam
With wild and lurid light ;
Old, bloody purple mantles stream
Out on the winds of night.

They float and flap around a brow
By boiling passion stirred ;
The hero, as in anger, now,
Deep-breathing, grasps his sword.

He dreams ; — a hundred realms, in dream,
Erect him each a throne ;
High on a car, with golden beam,
He sits as Ammon's son.

With thousand throats, to welcome him
The glowing Orient cries,
While at his feet the fire grows dim,
Gives one faint flash — and dies.

Ferdinand Freiligrath. Tr. C. T. Brooks.

THE BATTLE OF THE NILE.

SHOUT! for the Lord hath triumphed gloriously!
Upon the shores of that renowned land,
Where erst his mighty arm and outstretched hand
He lifted high,
And dashed, in pieces dashed the enemy; —
Upon that ancient coast,
Where Pharaoh's chariot and his host
He cast into the deep,
Whilst o'er their silent pomp he bid the swollen sea to
sweep;
Upon that eastern shore,
That saw his awful arm revealed of yore,
Again hath he arisen, and opposed
His foes' defying vaunt: o'er them the deep hath
closed!

Shades of mighty chiefs of yore,
Who triumphed on the selfsame shore:
Ammon, who first o'er ocean's empire wide
Didst bid the bold bark stem the roaring tide;
Sesac, who from the east to farthest west
Didst rear thy pillars over realms subdued;
And thou, whose bones do rest

In the huge pyramid's dim solitude,
 Beneath the uncouth stone,
 Thy name and deeds unknown;
 And Philip's glorious son,
With conquest flushed, for fields and cities won;
 And thou, imperial Cæsar, whose sole sway
The long-disputed world at length confessed,
 When on these shores thy bleeding rival lay!

O, could ye, starting from your long, cold rest,
 Burst Death's oblivious trance,
And once again with pluméd pride advance,
 How would ye own your fame surpassed,
And on the sand your trophies cast,
 When, the storm of conflict o'er,
 And ceased the burning battle's roar,
 Beneath the morning's orient light,
 Ye saw, with sails all swelling white,
Britain's proud fleet, to many a joyful cry,
Ride o'er the rolling surge in awful sovereignty!

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Calm breathed the airs along the evening bay,
 Where, all in warlike pride,
The Gallic squadron stretched its long array;
 And o'er the tranquil tide
 With beauteous bend the streamers waved on high.
But, ah! how changed the scene ere night descends!
Hark to the shout that heaven's high concave rends!
 Hark to that dying cry!
 Whilst, louder yet, the cannon's roar

Resounds along the Nile's affrighted shore,
Where from his oozy bed,
The cowering crocodile hath raised his head!
What bursting flame
Lightens the long track of the gleaming brine!
From yon proud ship it came,
That towered the leader of the hostile line!
Now loud explosion rends the midnight air!
Heard ye the last deep groaning of despair?
Heaven's fiery cope unwonted thunders fill,
Then, with one dreadful pause, earth, air, and seas
are still!

But now the mingled fight
Begins its awful strife again!
Through the dun shades of night
Along the darkly heaving main
Is seen the frequent flash;
And many a towering mast with dreadful crash
Rings falling. Is the scene of slaughter o'er?
Is the death-cry heard no more?
Lo! where the east a glimmering freckle streaks,
Slow o'er the shadowy wave the gray dawn breaks.
Behold, O sun, the flood
Strewed with the dead, and dark with blood!
Behold, all scattered on the rocking tide,
The wrecks of haughty Gallia's pride!
But Britain's floating bulwarks, with serene
And silent pomp, amid the deathful scene
Move glorious, and more beautiful display
Their ensigns streaming to thy orient ray.

Awful Genius of the land !

Who (thy reign of glory closed)

By marble wrecks, half hid in sand,

Hast mournfully reposed ;

Who long, amid the wasteful desert wide,

Hast loved with deathlike stillness to abide ;

Or wrapped in tenfold gloom,

From noise of human things for ages hid,

Hast sat upon the shapeless tomb

In the forlorn and dripping pyramid ;

Awake ! Arise !

Though thou behold the day no more

That saw thy pride and pomp of yore ;

Though, like the sounds that in the morning ray

Trembled and died away

From Memnon's statue ; though, like these, the voice

That bade thy vernal plains rejoice,

The voice of Science, is no longer heard ;

And all thy gorgeous state hath disappeared :

Yet hear, with triumph, and with hope again,

The shouts of joy that swell from thy forsaken main !

William Lisle Bowles.

CASABIANCA.

THE boy stood on the burning deck

Whence all but he had fled ;

The flame that lit the battle's wreck

Shone round him o'er the dead.

Yet beautiful and bright he stood,

As born to rule the storm, —

A creature of heroic blood,
A proud though childlike form.

The flames rolled on,—he would not go
Without his father's word;
That father, faint in death below,
His voice no longer heard.

He called aloud, "Say, father! say,
If yet my task is done!"
He knew not that the chieftain lay
Unconscious of his son.

"Speak, father!" once again he cried,
"If I may yet be gone!"
And but the booming shots replied,
And fast the flame rolled on.

Upon his brow he felt their breath,
And in his waving hair,
And looked from that lone post of death
In still yet brave despair;

And shouted but once more aloud,
"My father! must I stay?"
While o'er him fast, through sail and shroud,
The wreathing fires made way.

They wrapped the ship in splendor wild,
They caught the flag on high,
And streamed above the gallant child
Like banners in the sky.

There came a burst of thunder sound,—
The boy — oh, where was he?
Ask of the winds that far around
With fragments strowed the sea!

With mast and helm and pennon fair,
That well had borne their part,
But the noblest thing which perished there
Was that young faithful heart!

Felicia Hemans.

THE DELTA OF THE NILE.

THE stream that late turned busy towns to isles
Hath curbed its flood: again the landscape smiles;
The meads are full of flowers, the groves of birds,
Through blooming clover stray the lowing herds;
High waves the flax, the yellow lupin blows,
Mid bright green leaves the ripening melon glows.
The fellah, clad in blue loose-floating vest,
Sings as he toils, with rude contentment blest.
But chief from Delta's gardens Zephyr brings
Luxurious sweetness on his balmy wings;
For there her head the golden lily rears,
The soft-eyed violet sheds her odorous tears,
While the red rose unfolds his musky breast,
And wooes the hovering sylph to fragrant rest.
The bright kingfisher skims the level stream,
His wings of purple glittering in the beam;
And when the sun goes down o'er Damiat's vales,
Burst into song a myriad nightingales.

Beauty in every form that meets the eye,
Freshness on earth, and splendor in the sky,
Man's spirit scarce for Eden's bowers might pine,
While scenes like these around him live and shine ;
Land of hoar tombs ! dark home of Pharaoh's race !
Thou 'rt old in all things save sweet Nature's face.

Nicholas Michell.



Philæ, the Island.

THE ISLAND OF PHILÆ.

TRANQUIL above the rapids, rocks, and shoals,
The Tivoli of Egypt, Philæ lies ;
No more the frontier-fortress that controls
The rush of Ethiopian enemies, —
No more the Isle of Temples to surprise,
With hierophantic courts and porticos,
The simple stranger, but a scene where vies
Dead Art with living Nature, to compose
For that my pilgrimage a fit and happy close.

There I could taste without distress of thought
The placid splendors of a Nubian night,
The sky with beautiful devices fraught
Of suns and moons and spaces of white light :
While on huge gateways rose the forms of might,
Awful as when the people's heart they swayed,
And the grotesque grew solemn to my sight ;

And earnest faces thronged the colonnade,
As if they wailed a faith forgotten or betrayed.

There too, in calmer mood, I sent aflight
My mind through realms of marvel stretching far,
O'er Abyssinian Alps of fabled height,
O'er deserts where no paths or guidance are,
Save when, by pilotage of some bright star,
As on the ocean, wends the caravan;
And then I almost mourned the mythic bar
That in old times along that frontier ran,
When gods came down to feast with Ethiopian man.

For I remembered races numberless,
Whom still those latitudes in mystery fold,
And asked, what does the Past, my monitress,
For them within her genial bosom hold?
Where is for them the tale of history told?
How is their world advancing on its way?
How are they wiser, better, or more bold,
That they were not created yesterday?
Why are we life-taught men, why poor ephemerals they?

Lord Houghton.

PHILÆ.

O NUBIAN moon, the silence, is it thine
Which follows us by this enchanted shore;
Haunting thy shadows' gloom as they incline
Like basalt shafts prone on the ivory floor?
A peopled silence, where old shapes divine

In long procession pass each sculptured door.
 Nor wholly voiceless, for each rustling wave,
 Trembling mimosa, and dim palmy crest,
 And the low zephyr lingering by his grave,
 Who needed not its dark oblivious rest,
 Whisper—till every silent architrave,
 And stately pylon own the immortal Guest,
 And the wave bears it as its waters pour,
 Murmuring Osiris through the Cataract's roar!

Thomas Gold Appleton.

Sais.

THE VEILED IMAGE AT SAIS.

A YOUTH, athirst for knowledge, (hot desire !)
 To Sais came, intent to explore the dark
 And hoarded wisdom of Egyptian priests.
 Through many a grade of mystery, hurrying on,
 Far, and more far, still pressed the inquiring soul,
 And scarce the Hierophant could cool or calm
 The studious fever of impatient toil.
 "What," he exclaimed, "is worth a part of Truth?
 What is my gain unless I gain the whole?
 Has Knowledge, then, a lesser or a more?
 Is this—thy Truth—like sensual, gross enjoyment,
 A sum doled out to each in all degrees,
 Larger or smaller, multiplied or minished?
 Is not Truth one and indivisible?"

Take from the harmony a single tone,
A single tint take from the Iris bow,
And lo! what once was all, is nothing — while
Fails to the lovely whole one tint or tone!”

Now, while they thus conversed, they stood within
A lonely temple, circle-shaped, and still;
And, as the young man paused abrupt, his gaze
Upon a veiled and giant image fell:
Amazed he turned unto his guide,— “And what
Beneath the veil stands shrouded yonder?”

“Truth,”

Answered the priest.

“And do I, then, for Truth
Strive, and alone? And is it now by this
Thin ceremonial robe that Truth is hid?
Wherefore?”

“That wherefore with the Goddess rests;
‘Till I’—thus saith the Goddess—‘lift this veil,
May it be raised by none of mortal born!
He who with guilty and unhallowed hand
Too soon profanes the holy and forbidden,—
He,’ says the Goddess—”

“Well?”

“‘He—shall see Truth!’”

“A rare, strange oracle! And hast thou never
Lifted the veil?”

“No! nor desired to raise!”

“What! nor desired? Were I shut out from Truth
By this slight barrier—” “And command divine,”
Broke on his speech the guide. “Far weightier, son,

This airy gauze than thy conjectures deem, —
Light to the touch, lead-heavy to the conscience !”

The young man, thoughtful, turned him to his home,
And the fierce fever of the wish to know
Robbed night of sleep. Upon his couch he rolled ;—
At midnight rose resolved — Unto the shrine !

Timorously stole the involuntary step —
But light the bound that sealed the holy wall,
And dauntless was the spring that bore within
That circle’s solemn dome the daring man.

Now halts he where the lifeless Silence sleeps
In the embrace of mournful Solitude ;—
Silence unstirred, save by the hollow echo
Answering his tread along mysterious vaults !
High from the opening of the dome above
Came the wan shining of the silver moon,
And, awful as some pale presiding god,
Glistening adown the range of vaults obscure,
In its long veil concealed the image stood.

With an unsteady step he onward past,
Already touched with violating hand
The Holy — and recoiled ! A shudder thrilled
His limbs, fire-hot and icy-cold by turns,
And an invisible arm did seem to pluck him
Back from the deed. “ O miserable man !
What wouldst thou ? ” (Thus within the inmost heart
Murmured the warning whisper.) “ Wilt thou dare

The All-hallowed to profane? 'May mortal-born
 (So spake the oracular word) not lift the veil
 Till I myself shall raise!' Yet said it not,
 The same oracular word, 'Who lifts the veil,
 He shall see Truth'? Behind, be what there may,
 I dare the hazard — I will lift the veil" —
 Loud rang his shouting voice — "and I will see!"
"See!"

A lengthened echo, mocking, shrilled again!
 He spoke and raised the veil! And ask ye what
 Unto the gaze was there within revealed?
 I know not. Pale and senseless, at the foot
 Of the dread statue of Egyptian Isis,
 The priests beheld him at the dawn of day;
 But what he saw, or what did there befall,
 His lips disclosed not. Ever from his heart
 Was fled the sweet serenity of life,
 And the deep anguish dug the early grave:
 "Woe, woe to him" — such were his warning words,
 Answering some curious and impetuous brain,
 "Woe — for she never shall delight him more!
 Woe, — woe to him who treads through guilt to Truth!"

Friedrich von Schiller. Tr. J. Merivale.

SAIS.

AN awful statue, by a veil half hid,
 At Sais stands. One came, to whom was known
 All lore committed to Etruscan stone,
 And all sweet voices, that dull Time has chid

To silence now, by antique pyramid,
 Skirting the desert, heard ; and what the deep
 May in its dimly lighted chambers keep,
 Where Genii groan beneath the seal-bound lid.
 He dared to raise that yet unlifted veil
 With hands not pure, but never might unfold
 What there he saw : madness, the shadow, fell
 On his few days, ere yet he went to dwell
 With Night's eternal people, and his tale
 Has thus remained, and will remain, untold.

Richard Chenevix Trench.



Tentyra (Denderah).

TENTYRA.

WHAT yonder rises ? 'T is Tentyra's fane,
 That stands, like some dark giant, on the plain.
 Rival of Karnak, Edfou, stern and lone,
 It looks to heaven, its founder, date unknown.
 Its lofty portico and painted walls,
 Its snake-wreathed globes and dim resounding halls,
 Towers where ten thousand sculptured forms ye trace,
 Awe with their vastness, charm us with their grace.
 And this was Isis' dwelling, — still she stands
 Breathing from stone, with meekly lifted hands.
 Dark mother ! to whom zeal these walls upreared,
 Whom monarchs revered, and whom myriads feared,
 What wert thou, shrouded in thy silver veil,

That thus the ancient world should bend and quail?
Didst thou, as mortal beauty once adored,
Break by love's charm the sceptre and the sword?
Wert thou a queen, and, when life's dream was o'er,
A goddess hailed to rule forevermore?—
Vain, mystic being! will each effort be
To pierce the cloud that wraps thy age and thee,
Thy pompous rites as secret as thy birth,
Thy solemn worship passed away from earth.

Nicholas Michell.



Thebes.

THEBES.

WHO would not feel and satisfy this want,
Watching, as I, in Karnak's roofless halls,
Subnuvolar lights of evening sharply slant
Through pillared masses and on wasted walls?
Who would not learn, there is no form but palls
On the progressive spirit of mankind,
When here around in soulless sorrow falls
That which seemed permanence itself, designed
To raze the sense of death from out all human mind.

For near the temple ever lies the tomb,
The dwelling, not the dungeon, of the dead,
Where they abide in glorifying gloom,
In lofty chambers with rich colors spread,

Vast corridors, all carved and decorated
For entertainment of their ghostly lord,
When he may leave his alabaster bed,
And see, with pleasure earth could scarce afford,
These subterranean walls his power and wealth record.

Often 't was willed this splendor should be sealed
Not only from profane but priestly eyes,
That to no future gaze might be revealed
The secret palace where a Pharaoh lies,
Amid his world-enduring obsequies;
And though we, children of a distant shore,
Here search and scan, yet much our skill defies;
One chance the less, some grains of sand the more,
And never had been found that vault's mysterious door.
Lord Houghton.

THEBES.

THEBES, hearing still the Memnon's mystic tones,
Where Egypt's earliest monarchs reared their
 thrones,
Favored of Jove! the hundred-gated queen
Though fallen, grand; though desolate, serene;
The blood with awe runs coldly through our veins,
As we approach her far-spread, vast remains.
Forests of pillars crown old Nilus' side,
Obelisks to heaven high lift their sculptured pride;
Rows of dark sphinxes, sweeping far away,
Lead to proud fanes, and tombs august as they.
Colossal chiefs in granite sit around,

As wrapped in thought, or sunk in grief profound.
Titans or gods sure built these walls that stand
Defying years, and Ruin's wasting hand.
So vast, sublime the view, we almost deem
We rove, spell-bound, through some fantastic dream,
Sweep through the halls that Typhon rears below,
And see, in yon dark Nile, hell's rivers flow.
E'en as we walk these fanes and ruined ways,
In musings lost, yet dazzled while we gaze,
The mighty columns ranged in long array,
The statues fresh as chiselled yesterday,
We scarce can think two thousand years have flown
Since in proud Thebes a Pharaoh's grandeur shone,
But in yon marble court or sphinx-lined street
Some moving pageant half expect to meet,
See great Sesostris, come from distant war,
Kings linked in chains to drag his ivory car;
Or view that bright procession sweeping on,
To meet at Memphis far-famed Solomon,
When, borne by Love, he crossed the Syrian wild,
To wed the royal Pharaoh's blooming child.

Here let me sit in Karnak's gorgeous hall,
Firm as when reared each massy pictured wall:
Yielding to meditation's calm control,
How shrinks, in conscious littleness, the soul!
And as thought leaps the gulf that yawns between
Past days and now, what is and what hath been,
How brief, how petty human life appears!
A cloud that fleeteth as it rains its tears;
A puny wave on Time's vast ocean-shore,

That frets and foams, then melts to swell no more.
These ancient piles a higher moral teach
Than sage can write, or orator can preach:
The heart grows humbler in a scene like this,
Yet soars above low schemes of transient bliss;
And while it sighs that man should waste his hours,
Rearing such mighty fanes to unknown powers,
Looks inward at the creed itself maintains,
If born of heaven, or free from error's stains.

But musing thus, by wandering dreams beguiled,
We half forget the fabrics round us piled, —
Fabrics that breathe from every sculptured stone
Awe and a solemn grandeur all their own.
Dim vistas stretch, white columns yonder rise,
And obelisks point, like flame, into the skies.
There frown huge kings in stone, — such frown they
wore
When on their thrones three thousand years before;
And one, the mightiest, Isis' arms entwine,
Immortal deemed, and like herself divine.
O, wondrous art! yon granite roof behold!
Fair still the colors, glittering still the gold;
In azure skies, moons, clustering stars, appear, —
Alas! the cunning hand that traced them here!
But pass we altars and rich glorious things,
Gigantic pillars, echoing halls of kings;
What see we traced in outline? shadowy, dim,
The very breathing face and sinewy limb, —
'T is Thothmes, he who bade the Hebrew groan,
When hailstones fell and thunders shook his throne,

He to whom Moses spoke, the king who sped
On wings of wrath when trembling Israel fled,
Raised his bright sword, and drove his bickering car,
Comet-like breathling terror from afar,
Pursued his foe adown the Red Sea coast,
Then sank engulfed with all his fiery host.

Nicholas Michell.

THEBES.

I SAW, as in a dream, the pride of Thebes.
The hundred-gated walls in majesty
Rose high above the meads where harvest grain
Waved musical before the morning breeze.
The strains of Memnon hailed the coming day,
And sun-gilt wreaths of smoke curled slowly up
From myriad hecatombs, as mystic rites
Were offered at the shrines of Mizraim's gods.
Lo! winding through the wide champaign, and by
The eternal Nile, Rameses victor came,
Leading a veteran host, whose flaming arms
Had roused Libanus' eagles, and had gleamed
Upon the famed Hydaspes' amber tide.
The royal pageant moved along the aisle
Of solemn-featured sphinxes to Karnak,
Until beneath the pillars lotus-crowned,
A voice said, "Welcome here, son of the gods."

Such once was Thebes. Meridian glory sheened
Her battlements ere god-built Ilion fell.
But now, ye who would vaunt yourselves in man,

Behold her desolation. Fate has walked
With hearse-like shadow where the Pharaohs dwelt;
And now the summer sun diurnal flecks
With rosy light deserted colonnades,
Where sings the grasshopper his droning tune,
Where dreams the desert's swarthy child, and bleats
The plaintive flock. The moon glides up the vault,
And her first rays illumine the rugged brows
Of the Memnonium's marble men, who loom
Beneath that pallid light like giant ghosts
Above the haunted land; the owlet chants
His wizard requiem o'er Karnak the lone,
The bat flits round amid the sculptured blocks,
And the sad night-wind sobs as it has wailed
For ages through the pylons hoar and gloomed.

Like ancient wood, whose river-shadowing trees,
Stripped of their leafy crests by autumn gales,
Stand dismal skeletons, and mourn their fate —
Thus Luxor's grove of columns has looked down
August with age these thrice ten hundred years,
Upon the azure Nile, that rolls sublime,
A mystery of mysteries, whose founts
Are sealed to mortal eye. A wilderness
Weaves o'er its flood arcades of sylvan green,
Until it leaves its native wilds, and roams
By empires long decayed, and cities left
To the hyena's den. By Thebes it sweeps
With solitary grandeur towards the sea.
But still its waves their annual tribute bring,
And bless the parched wold with vernal bloom,

And pay obeisance at stern Memnon's feet, —
The monarch grim of Thebes's solitude,
Who to Imagination's ear yet sings
The dirge notes of the nations as they die.

Seymour Green Wheeler Benjamin.

THE HERMIT OF THE THEBAID.

O STRONG, upwelling prayers of faith,
From inmost founts of life ye start, —
The spirit's pulse, the vital breath
Of soul and heart!

From pastoral toil, from traffic's din,
Alone, in crowds, at home, abroad,
Unheard of man, ye enter in
The ear of God.

Ye brook no forced and measured tasks,
Nor weary rote, nor formal chains;
The simple heart, that freely asks
In love, obtains.

For man the living temple is:
The mercy-seat and cherubim,
And all the holy mysteries,
He bears with him.

And most avails the prayer of love,
Which, wordless, shapes itself in deeds,

And wearies heaven for naught above
Our common needs.

Which brings to God's all-perfect will
That trust of his undoubting child,
Whereby all seeming good and ill
Are reconciled.

And, seeking not for special signs
Of favor, is content to fall
Within the providence which shines
And rains on all.

Alone, the Thebaid hermit leaned
At noontime o'er the sacred word.
Was it an angel or a fiend
Whose voice he heard?

It broke the desert's hush of awe,
A human utterance, sweet and mild;
And, looking up, the hermit saw
A little child.

A child, with wonder-widened eyes,
O'erawed and troubled by the sight
Of hot, red sands, and brazen skies,
And anchorite.

"What dost thou here, poor man? No shade
Of cool, green douns, nor grass, nor well,
Nor corn, nor vines." The hermit said:
"With God I dwell.

“Alone with Him in this great calm,
I live not by the outward sense;
My Nile his love, my sheltering palm
His providence.”

The child gazed round him. “Does God live
Here only? — where the desert’s rim
Is green with corn, at morn and eve,
We pray to him.

“My brother tills beside the Nile
His little field: beneath the leaves
My sisters sit and spin the while,
My mother weaves.

“And when the millet’s ripe heads fall,
And all the bean-field hangs in pod,
My mother smiles, and says that all
Are gifts from God.

“And when to share our evening meal,
She calls the stranger at the door,
She says God fills the hands that deal
Food to the poor.”

Adown the hermit’s wasted cheeks
Glistened the flow of human tears;
“Dear Lord!” he said, “thy angel speaks,
Thy servant hears.”

Within his arms the child he took,
And thought of home and life with men;

And all his pilgrim feet forsook
Returned again.

The palmy shadows cool and long,
The eyes that smiled through lavish locks,
Home's cradle-hymn and harvest-song,
And bleat of flocks.

"O child!" he said, "thou teachest me
There is no place where God is not;
That love will make, where'er it be,
A holy spot."

He rose from off the desert sand,
And, leaning on his staff of thorn,
Went, with the young child, hand in hand,
Like night with morn.

They crossed the desert's burning line,
And heard the palm-tree's rustling fan,
The Nile-bird's cry, the low of kine,
And voice of man.

Unquestioning, his childish guide
He followed as the small hand led
To where a woman, gentle-eyed,
Her distaff fed.

She rose, she clasped her truant boy,
She thanked the stranger with her eyes.
The hermit gazed in doubt and joy
And dumb surprise.

And lo! — with sudden warmth and light
A tender memory thrilled his frame;
New-born, the world-lost anchorite
A man became.

“O sister of El Zara’s race,
Behold me! — had we not one mother?”
She gazed into the stranger’s face; —
“Thou art my brother?”

“O kin of blood! — Thy life of use
And patient trust is more than mine;
And wiser than the gray recluse
This child of thine.

“For, taught of him whom God hath sent,
That toil is praise, and love is prayer,
I come, life’s cares and pains content
With thee to share.”

Even as his foot the threshold crossed,
The hermit’s better life began;
Its holiest saint the Thebaid lost,
And found a man!

John Greenleaf Whittier.



SAHARA, THE GREAT DESERT.

Sahara.

CATO IN THE DESERTS OF AFRICA.

NOW near approaching to the burning zone,
To warmer, calmer skies they journeyed on.
The slackening storms the neighboring sun confess,
The heat strikes fiercer, and the winds grow less,
Whilst parching thirst and fainting sweats increase.
As forward on the weary way they went,
Panting with drought, and all with labor spent,
Amidst the desert desolate and dry,
One chanced a little trickling spring to spy:
Proud of the prize, he drained the scanty store,
And in his helmet to the chieftain bore.
Around, in crowds, the thirsty legions stood,
Their throats and clammy jaws with dust bestrewed,
And all with wishful eyes the liquid treasure viewed.
Round the leader cast his careful look,
Sternly, the tempting envied gift he took,
Held it, and thus the giver fierce bespoke:

“And think’st thou then that I want virtue most!
Am I the meanest of this Roman host!
Am I the first soft coward that complains!
That shrinks, unequal to these glorious pains!
Am I in ease and infamy the first!
Rather be thou, base as thou art, accursed,
Thou that dar’st drink, when all beside thee thirst.”
He said; and wrathful stretching forth his hand,
Poured out the precious draught upon the sand.
Well did the water thus for all provide,
Envied by none, while thus to all denied,
A little thus the general want supplied.

Lucan. Tr. N. Rowe.

THE SPECTRE-CARAVAN.

T WAS at midnight, in the desert, where we rested
on the ground;
There my Beddawcens were sleeping, and their steeds
were stretched around;
In the farness lay the moonlight on the mountains of
the Nile,
And the camel-bones that strewed the sands for many
an arid mile.

With my saddle for a pillow I did prop my weary head,
And my caftan-cloth unfolded o’er my limbs was lightly
spread,
While beside me, both as captain and as watchman of
my band,
Lay my Bazra sword and pistols twain a-shimmering
on the sand.

And the stillness was unbroken, save at moments, by
a cry
From some stray belated vulture sailing blackly down
the sky,
Or the snortings of a sleeping steed at waters fancy-
seen,
Or the hurried warlike mutterings of some dreaming
Beddaween.

When, behold! — a sudden sandquake, — and atween
the earth and moon
Rose a mighty host of shadows, as from out some dim
lagoon;
Then our coursers gasped with terror, and a thrill
shook every man,
And the cry was “Allah Akbar! ’t is the Spectre-
Caravan!”

On they came, their hueless faces toward Mecca ever-
more:
On they came, long files of camels, and of women whom
they bore;
Guides and merchants, youthful maidens, bearing pitch-
ers like Rebecca,
And behind them troops of horsemen, dashing, hurrying
on to Mecca!

More and more! the phantom-pageant overshadowed all
the plains,
Yea, the ghastly camel-bones arose, and grew to camel-
trains;

And the whirling column-clouds of sand to forms in
dusky garbs,
Here, afoot as Hadjee pilgrims, — there, as warriors on
their barbs!

Whence we knew the night was come when all whom
death had sought and found,
Long ago amid the sands whereon their bones yet
bleach around,
Rise by legions from the darkness of their prisons low
and lone,
And in dim procession march to kiss the Kaaba's Holy
Stone.

More and more! the last in order have not passed
across the plain,
Ere the first with slackened bridle fast are flying back
again.
From Cape Verde's palmy summits, even to Babel-
Mandel's sands,
They have sped ere yet my charger, wildly rearing,
breaks his bands!

Courage! hold the plunging horses; each man to his
charger's head!
Tremble not as timid sheep-flocks tremble at the lion's
tread.
Fear not, though you waving mantles fan you as they
hasten on;
Call on Allah! and the pageant ere you look again is
gone!

Patience! till the morning breezes wave again your
turban's plume;

Morning air and rosy dawning are their heralds to the
tomb.

Once again to dust shall daylight doom these wander-
ers of the night;

See, it dawns! — a joyous welcome neigh our horses
to the light!

Ferdinand Freiligrath. Tr. J. C. Mangan.

MIRAGE.

ALL o'er the harbor gay with flags my restless eyes
a-wandering go;

But thine, with laughing glances, seek the plume that
droops across my brow!

“Fain of thy deserts I would hear, while waves are
gurgling round the boat;

Come, paint me something of the land from whence that
ostrich tuft was brought!”

Thou wilt? I shade my brow awhile beneath the hol-
low of my hand:

Let fall the curtain of thine eyes; lo! there the deserts'
glowing sand!

The camping places of the tribe that gave me birth,
thine eye discerns;

Bare in her sun-scorched widow's weed around thee
now Zahara burns.

Who travelled through the Lion-land? Of hoofs and
claws ye see the prints ;
Timbuctoo's caravan ! the spear far on the horizon,
yonder, glints ;
Wave banners ; purple through the dust streams out
the Emir's princely dress,
And grave, with sober stateliness, the camel's head
o'erlooks the press.

In serried troop, where sand and sky together melt,
they hurry on ;
Already in the sulphurous mist the lurid distance gulps
them down.
Yet by the riders' track too well ye trace the flying
onward host ;
Full thickly marked, the sand is strewn with many a
thing their speed has lost.

The first — a dromedary, dead — a ghastly milestone,
marks their course ;
Perched on the bulk, with naked throats, two vultures
revel, shrieking hoarse,
And eager for the meal delayed, yon costly turban little
heed,
Lost by an Arab youth, and left in the wild journey's
desperate speed.

Now bits of rich caparisons the thorny tamarind bushes
strew ;
And nearer, drained, and white with dust, a water-skin,
rent through and through ;

Who's he that kicks the gaping thing, and furious
stares with quivering lid?

It is the black-haired Sheik, who rules the land of
Biledulgerid.

He closed the rear; the courser fell, and cast him off,
and fled away;

All panting to his girdle hangs his favorite wife, in wild
deray;

How flashed her eye, as, raised to sell, at dawn she
smiled upon her lord!

Now through the waste he drags her on, as from a
baldric trails a sword.

The sultry sand that but at night the lion's shaggy tail
beats down,

The hair of yonder helpless thing now sweeps, in tangled
tresses strown;

It gathers in her flow of locks, burns up her sweet
lips' spicy dew;

• Its cruel flints, with sanguine streaks, her tender drag-
ging limbs imbrue.

And now the stronger Emir fails! with boiling blood
his pulses strain;

His eye is gorged, and on his brow, blue glistening,
beats the throbbing vein;

With one devouring kiss, his last, he wakes the droop-
ing Moorish child;

Then flings himself, with furious curse, down on the red
unsheltered Wild.

But she, amazed, looks round her:—"Ha! what sight?

My lord, awake, behold!

The Heaven, that seemed all brazen, how like steel it
glitters, clear and cold!

The desert's yellow glare is lost! All round the daz-
zling light appears,—

It is a glitter like the sea's, that with its breakers
rocks Algiers!

"It surges, sparkles, like a stream! I scent its mois-
ture cool from hence;

A wide-spread mirror yonder gleams! Awake! It is
the Nile perchance.

Yet no! We travelled south, indeed;— then surely 't is
the Senegal!

Or, can it be the ocean free, whose billows yonder rise
and fall?

"What matter? still 't is water! Wake! My cloak's
already flung away,—

Awake, my lord! and let us on — this deadly scorching
to allay!

A cooling draught, a freshening bath, with life anew
will nerve our limbs,

To reach yon fortress towering high, that distance now
with rack bedims.

"I see around its portals gray the crimson banners,
waving, set;

Its battled ramparts rough with spears; its hold with
mosque and minaret;

All in its roads, with lofty masts, slow rocking, many
a galley lies;
Our travellers crowd its rich bazaars, and fill its caravansaries.

“Beloved! I am faint with thirst! wake up! the
twilight nears!”—Alas!

He raised his eye once more, and groaned—“It is
the desert’s mocking glass!

A cheat, the play of spiteful fiends, more cruel than
the Smoom!”—All hoarse

He stopped:—the vision fades!—she sank, the dying
girl, upon his corse!

—Thus of his native land the Moor in Venice Haven
oft would tell:

On Desdemona’s eager ear, the Captain’s story thrilling
fell.

She started, as the gondola jarred on the quay with
trembling prow;

He, silent, to the palace led the heiress of Brabantio.

Ferdinand Freiligrath. Tr. J. R. Chorley.

THE LION’S RIDE.

KING of deserts reigns the lion; will he through his
realm go riding,

Down to the lagoon he paces, in the tall sedge there lies
hiding.

Where gazelles and camelopards drink, he crouches by
the shore;

Ominous, above the monster, moans the quivering sycamore.

When, at dusk, the ruddy hearthfires in the Hottentot
kraals are glowing,
And the motley, changeful signals on the Table Mountain
growing
Dim and distant, — when the Caffre sweeps along the
lone karroo, —
When in the bush the antelope slumbers, and beside
the stream the gnu, —

Lo ! majestically stalking, yonder comes the tall giraffe,
Hot with thirst, the gloomy waters of the dull lagoon
to quaff ;
O'er the naked waste behold her, with parched tongue,
all panting hasten, —
Now she sucks the cool draught, kneeling, from the
stagnant, slimy basin.

Hark ! a rustling in the sedges ! with a roar, the lion
springs
On her back now. What a race-horse ! Say, in proudest
stalls of kings,
Saw one ever richer housings than the courser's motley
hide,
On whose back the tawny monarch of the beasts to-
night will ride ?

Fixed his teeth are in the muscles of the nape, with
greedy strain ;
Round the giant courser's withers waves the rider's
yellow mane.

With a hollow cry of anguish, leaps and flies the tortured steed ;
See her, how with skin of leopard she combines the camel's speed !

See, with lightly beating footsteps, how she scours the moonlit plains !
From their sockets start the eyeballs ; from the torn and bleeding veins,
Fast the thick, black drops come trickling, o'er the brown and dappled neck,
And the flying beast's heart-beatings audible the stillness make.

Like the cloud, that, guiding Israel through the land of Yemen, shone,
Like a spirit of the desert, like a phantom, pale and wan,
O'er the desert's sandy ocean, like a waterspout at sea,
Whirls a yellow, cloudy column, tracking them where'er they flee.

On their track the vulture follows, flapping, croaking, through the air,
And the terrible hyena, plunderer of tombs, is there ;
Follows them the stealthy panther, — Cape-town's folds have known him well ;
Them their monarch's dreadful pathway, blood and sweat full plainly tell.

On his living throne, they, quaking, see their ruler sitting there,
With sharp claw the painted cushion of his seat they see him tear.

Restless the giraffe must bear him on, till strength and
life-blood fail her;
Mastered by such daring rider, rearing, plunging, naught
avail her.

To the desert's verge she staggers, — sinks, — one groan
— and all is o'er.

Now the steed shall feast the rider, dead, and smeared
with dust and gore.

Far across, o'er Madagascar, faintly now the morning
breaks ; —

Thus the king of beasts his journey nightly through his
empire makes.

Ferdinand Freiligrath. Tr. C. T. Brooks.

SONG OF SLAVES IN THE DESERT.

WHERE are we going? where are we going,
Where are we going, Rubee?

Lord of peoples, lord of lands,
Look across these shining sands,
Through the furnace of the noon,
Through the white light of the moon.
Strong the Ghiblee wind is blowing,
Strange and large the world is growing!
Speak and tell us where we are going,
Where are we going, Rubee?

Bornou land was rich and good,
Wells of water, fields of food,
Dourra fields, and bloom of bean,

And the palm-tree cool and green :
Bornou land we see no longer,
Here we thirst and here we hunger,
Here the Moor-man smites in anger :

Where are we going, Rubee ?

When we went from Bornou land,
We were like the leaves and sand,
We were many, we are few ;
Life has one, and death has two :
Whitened bones our path are showing,
Thou All-seeing, thou All-knowing !
Hear us, tell us, where are we going,
Where are we going, Rubee ?

Moons of marches from our eyes
Bornou land behind us lies ;
Stranger round us day by day
Bends the desert circle gray ;
Wild the waves of sand are flowing,
Hot the winds above them blowing, —
Lord of all things ! — where are we going ?

Where are we going, Rubee ?

We are weak, but Thou art strong ;
Short our lives, but Thine is long ;
We are blind, but Thou hast eyes ;
We are fools, but Thou art wise !
Thou, our morrow's pathway knowing
Through the strange world round us growing,
Hear us, tell us where are we going,

Where are we going, Rubee ?

John Greenleaf Whittier.

THE SIMOOM.

IT comes, the blast of death! that sudden glare
Tinges with purple hues the stagnant air:
Fearful in silence, o'er the heaving strand
Sweeps the wild gale, and licks the curling sand,
While o'er the vast Sahara from afar
Rushes the tempest in his wingéd car:
Swift from their bed the flame-like billows rise
Whirling and surging to the copper skies,
As when Briareus lifts his hundred arms,
Grasps at high heaven, and fills it with alarms;
In eddying chaos madly mixt on high
Gigantic pillars dance along the sky,
Or stalk in awful slowness through the gloom,
Or track the coursers of the dread simoom,
Or clashing in mid air, to ruin hurled,
Fall as the fragments of a shattered world! -

Hushed is the tempest, desolate the plain,
Stilled are the billows of that troubled main;
As if the voice of death had checked the storm,
Each sandy wave retains its sculptured form:
And all is silence, save the distant blast
That howled, and mocked the desert as it passed;
And all is solitude, for where are they,
That o'er Sahara wound their toilsome way?
Ask of the heavens above, that smile serene,
Ask that burnt spot, no more of lovely green,
Ask of the whirlwind in its purple cloud,
The desert is their grave, the sand their shroud.

Martin Farquhar Tupper.

DESERT HYMN TO THE SUN.

UNDER the arches of the morning sky,
Save in one heart, there beats no life of man;
The yellow sand-hills bleak and trackless lie,
And far behind them sleeps the caravan.
A silence, as before creation, broods
Sublimely o'er the desert solitudes.

A silence as if God in heaven were still,
And meditating some new wonder! Earth
And Air the solemn portent own, and thrill
With awful prescience of the coming birth.
And Night withdraws, and on their silver ears
Wheel to remotest space the trembling Stars.

See! an increasing brightness, broad and fleet,
Breaks on the morning in a rosy flood,
As if He smiled to see his work complete,
And rested from it, and pronounced it good.
The sands lie still, and every wind is furled:
The Sun comes up, and looks upon the world.

Is there no burst of music to proclaim
The pomp and majesty of this new lord?
A golden trumpet in each beam of flame,
Startling the universe with grand accord?
Must Earth be dumb beneath the splendors thrown
From his full orb to glorify her own?

No: with an answering splendor, more than sound
Instinct with gratulation, she adores.
With purple flame the porphyry hills are crowned,
And burn with gold the Desert's boundless floors;
And the lone Man compels his haughty knee,
And, prostrate at thy footstool, worships thee.

Before the dreadful glory of thy face
He veils his sight; he fears the fiery rod
Which thou dost wield amid the brightening space,
As if the sceptre of a visible god.
If not the shadow of God's lustre, thou
Art the one jewel flaming on his brow.

Wrap me within the mantle of thy beams,
And feed my pulses with thy keenest fire!
Here, where thy full meridian deluge streams
Across the desert, let my blood aspire
To ripen in the vigor of thy blaze,
And catch a warmth to shine through darker days!

I am alone before thee: Lord of Light!
Begetter of the life of things that live!
Beget in me thy calm, self-balanced might;
To me thine own immortal ardor give.
Yea, though, like her who gave to Jove her charms,
My being wither in thy fiery arms.

Whence came thy splendors? Heaven is filled with
thee;
The sky's blue walls are dazzling with thy train;

Thou sitt'st alone in the Immensity,
And in thy lap the World grows young again.
Bathed in such brightness, drunken with the day,
He deems the Dark forever passed away.

But thou dost sheathe thy trenchant sword, and lean
With tempered grandeur towards the western gate;
Shedding thy glory with a brow serene,
And leaving heaven all golden with thy state:
Not as a king disrowned and overthrown,
But one who keeps, and shall reclaim his own.

Bayard Taylor.

ON THE DESERT.

ALL around,
A To the bound
Of the vast horizon's round,
All sand, sand, sand —
All burning, glaring sand —
On my camel's hump I ride,
As he sways from side to side,
With an awkward step of pride,
And his scraggy head uplifted, and his eye so long and
bland.

Naught is near,
In the blear
And simmering atmosphere,
But the shadow on the sand,
The shadow of the camel on the sand;

All alone, as I ride,
O'er the desert's ocean wide,
It is ever at my side ;
It haunts me, it pursues me, if I flee, or if I stand.

Not a sound,
All around,
Save the padded beat and bound
Of the camel on the sand,
Of the feet of the camel on the sand.
Not a bird is in the air,
Though the sun, with burning stare,
Is prying everywhere,
O'er the yellow thirsty desert, so desolately grand.

Not a breath
Stirs the death
Of the desert, nor a wreath
Curls upward from the sand,
From the waves of loose, fine sand, —
And I doze, half asleep, —
Of the wild Sirocs that sweep
O'er the caravans, and heap
With a cloud of powdery, dusty death, the terror-
stricken band.

Their groans
And their moans
Have departed, but their bones
Are whitening on the sand —
Are blanching and grinning on the sand,

O Allah ! thou art great !
Save me from such a fate,
Nor through that fearful strait
Lead me, thy basest servant, unto the Prophet-land.
William Wetmore Story.

THE CARAVAN IN THE DESERTS.

CALL it not loneliness, to dwell
In woodland shade or hermit dell,
Or the deep forest to explore,
Or wander Alpine regions o'er ;
For Nature there all joyous reigns,
And fills with life her wild domains :
A bird's light wing may break the air,
A wave, a leaf, may murmur there ;
A bee the mountain flowers may seek,
A chamois bound from peak to peak ;
An eagle, rushing to the sky,
Wake the deep echoes with his cry ;
And still some sound, thy heart to cheer,
Some voice, though not of man, is near.
But he whose weary step hath traced
Mysterious Afric's awful waste,
Whose eye Arabia's wilds hath viewed,
Can tell thee what is solitude !
It is, to traverse lifeless plains,
Where everlasting stillness reigns,
And billowy sands and dazzling sky
Seem boundless as infinity !

It is, to sink, with speechless dread,
In scenes unmeet for mortal tread,
Severed from earthly being's trace,
Alone, amidst eternal space !
'T is noon — and fearfully profound,
Silence is on the desert round ;
Alone she reigns, above, beneath,
With all the attributes of death !
No bird the blazing heaven may dare,
No insect bide the scorching air ;
The ostrich, though of sun-born race,
Seeks a more sheltered dwelling-place ;
The lion slumbers in his lair,
The serpent shuns the noontide glare :
But slowly wind the patient train
Of camels o'er the blasted plain,
Where they and man may brave alone
The terrors of the burning zone.

Faint not, O pilgrims ! though on high,
As a volcano, flame the sky ;
Shrink not, though as a furnace glow
The dark-red seas of sand below ;
Though not a shadow, save your own,
Across the dread expanse is thrown ;
Mark ! where, your feverish lips to lave,
Wide spreads the fresh transparent wave !
Urge your tired camels on, and take
Your rest beside yon glistening lake ;
Thence, haply, cooler gales may spring,
And fan your brows with lighter wing.

Lo ! nearer now, its glassy tide
Reflects the date-tree on its side —
Speed on ! pure draughts and genial air
And verdant shade await you there.
Oh, glimpse of heaven ! to him unknown,
That hath not trod the burning zone !
Forward they press, they gaze dismayed,
The waters of the desert fade !
Melting to vapors that elude
The eye, the lip, they vainly wooed.
What meteor comes ? — a purple haze
Hath half obscured the noontide rays :
Onward it moves in swift career,
A blush upon the atmosphere ;
Haste, haste ! avert the impending doom,
Fall prostrate ! 't is the dread Simoom !
Bow down your faces, till the blast
On its red wing of flame hath passed,
Far bearing o'er the sandy wave
The viewless Angel of the grave.

It came, 't is vanished, but hath left
The wanderers e'en of hope bereft ;
The ardent heart, the vigorous frame,
Pride, courage, strength, its power could tame :
Faint with despondence, worn with toil,
They sink upon the burning soil,
Resigned, amidst those realms of gloom,
To find their death-bed and their tomb.

But onward still ! — yon distant spot
Of verdure can deceive you not ;

Yon palms, which tremulously seemed
Reflected as the waters gleamed,
Along the horizon's verge displayed,
Still rear their slender colonnade, —
A landmark, guiding o'er the plain
The Caravan's exhausted train.
Fair is that little Isle of Bliss,
The desert's emerald oasis !
A rainbow on the torrent's wave,
A gem embosomed in the grave,
A sunbeam on a stormy day,
Its beauty's image might convey !
“ Beauty, in Horror's lap that sleeps,”
While Silence round her vigil keeps.
Rest, weary pilgrims ! calmly laid
To slumber in the acacia shade :
Rest, where the shrubs your camels bruise,
Their aromatic breath diffuse ;
Where softer light the sunbeams pour
Through the tall palm and sycamore ;
And the rich date luxuriant spreads
Its pendent clusters o'er your heads.
Nature once more, to seal your eyes,
Murmurs her sweetest lullabies ;
Again each heart the music hails
Of rustling leaves and sighing gales,
And oh, to Afric's child how dear
The voice of fountains gushing near !
Sweet be your slumbers ! and your dreams
Of waving groves and rippling streams !
Far be the serpent's venom'd coil

From the brief respite won by toil:
Far be the awful shades of those
Who deep beneath the sands repose, —
The hosts, to whom the desert's breath
Bore swift and stern the call of death.
Sleep! nor may scorching blast invade
The freshness of the acacia shade,
But gales of heaven your spirits bless,
With life's best balm, — forgetfulness!
Till night from many an urn diffuse
The treasures of her world of dews.

The day hath closed, — the moon on high
Walks in her cloudless majesty.
A thousand stars to Afric's heaven
Serene magnificence have given;
Pure beacons of the sky, whose flame
Shines forth eternally the same.
Blest be their beams, whose holy light
Shall guide the camel's footsteps right,
And lead, as with a track divine,
The pilgrim to his prophet's shrine! —
Rise! bid your Isle of Palms adieu!
Again your lonely march pursue,
While airs of night are freshly blowing,
And heavens with softer beauty glowing.
'T is silence all; the solemn scene
Wears, at each step, a ruder mien;
For giant-rocks, at distance piled,
Cast their deep shadows o'er the wild.
Darkly they rise, — what eye hath viewed

The caverns of their solitude?
Away! within those awful cells
The savage lord of Afric dwells!
Heard ye his voice? — the lion's roar
Swells as when billows break on shore.
Well may the camel shake with fear,
And the steed pant — his foe is near;
Haste! light the torch, bid watchfires throw
Far o'er the waste a ruddy glow;
Keep vigil, — guard the bright array
Of flames that scare him from his prey;
Within their magic circle press,
O wanderers of the wilderness!
Heap high the pile, and by its blaze,
Tell the wild tales of elder days.
Arabia's wondrous lore, that dwells
On warrior deeds, and wizard spells;
Enchanted domes, mid scenes like these,
Rising to vanish with the breeze;
Gardens, whose fruits are gems, that shed
Their light where mortal may not tread,
And spirits, o'er whose pearly halls
The eternal billow heaves and falls.
With charms like these, of mystic power,
Watchers! beguile the midnight hour.
Slowly that hour hath rolled away,
And star by star withdraws its ray.
Dark children of the sun! again
Your own rich orient hails his reign.
He comes, but veiled — with sanguine glare
Tingeing the mists that load the air;

Sounds of dismay, and signs of flame,
The approaching hurricane proclaim
'T is death's red banner streams on high —
Fly to the rocks for shelter! — fly!
Lo; darkening o'er the fiery skies,
The pillars of the desert rise!
On, in terrific grandeur wheeling,
A giant-host, the heavens concealing,
They move, like mighty genii forms,
Towering immense midst clouds and storms.
Who shall escape? — with awful force
The whirlwind bears them on their course,
They join, they rush resistless on,
The landmarks of the plain are gone;
The steps, the forms, from earth effaced,
Of those who trod the burning waste!
All whelmed, all hushed! — none left to bear
Sad record how they perished there!
No stone their tale of death shall tell,
The desert guards its mysteries well;
And o'er the unfathomed sandy deep,
Where low their nameless relics sleep,
Oft shall the future pilgrim tread,
Nor know his steps are on the dead.

Felicia Hemans.



CENTRAL AND SOUTHERN AFRICA.

Bushmen's (Bosjesman's) Country.

AFAR IN THE DESERT.

A FAR in the desert I love to ride,
With the silent Bush-boy alone by my side:
When the sorrows of life the soul o'ercast,
And, sick of the present, I cling to the past;
When the eye is suffused with regretful tears,
From the fond recollections of former years;
And shadows of things that have long since fled
Flit over the brain, like ghost of the dead:—
Bright visions of glory, that vanished too soon;
Day-dreams, that departed ere manhood's noon;
Attachments, by fate or by falsehood reft;
Companions of early days, lost or left;
And my native land, whose magical name
Thrills to the heart like electric flame;
The home of the childhood; the haunts of my prime;
All the passions and scenes of that rapturous time

When the feelings were young and the world was new,
 Like the fresh bowers of Eden unfolding to view;
 All, all now forsaken, forgotten, foregone;
 And I, a lone exile, remembered by none;
 My high aims abandoned, my good acts undone,
 Awearied of all that is under the sun; —
 With that sadness of heart which no stranger may scan,
 I fly to the desert afar from man!

Afar in the desert I love to ride,
 With the silent Bush-boy alone by my side:
 When the wild turmoil of this wearisome life,
 With its scenes of oppression, corruption, and strife;
 The proud man's frown and the base man's fear,
 The scorner's laugh and the sufferer's tear,
 And malice, and meanness, and falsehood, and folly,
 Dispose me to musing and dark melancholy;
 When my bosom is full, and my thoughts are high,
 And my soul is sick with the bondman's sigh, —
 Oh! then there is freedom, and joy, and pride,
 Afar in the desert alone to ride!
 There is rapture to vault on the champing steed,
 And to bound away with the eagle's speed,
 With the death-fraught firelock in my hand, —
 The only law of the desert land!

Afar in the desert I love to ride,
 With the silent Bush-boy alone by my side:
 Away, away from the dwellings of men,
 By the wild deer's haunt, by the buffalo's glen;
 By the valleys remote where the oribi plays,

POEMS OF PLACES.

Where the gnu, the gazelle, and the hartebeest graze,
And the kudu and eland unhunted recline
By the skirts of gray forests o'erhung with wild-vine;
Where the elephant browses at peace in his wood,
And the river-horse gambols unscared in the flood,
And the mighty rhinoceros wallows at will
In the fen where the wild ass is drinking his fill.

Afar in the desert I love to ride,
With the silent Bush-boy alone by my side:
O'er the brown karroo, where the fleeting cry
Of the springbok's fawn sounds plaintively,
And the timorous quagga's shrill-whistling neigh
Is heard by the fountain at twilight gray;
Where the zebra wantonly tosses his mane,
With wild hoof scouring the desolate plain;
And the fleet-footed ostrich over the waste
Speeds like a horseman who travels in haste,
Hieing away to the home of her rest,
Where she and her mate have scooped their nest,
Far hid from the pitiless plunderer's view
In the pathless depths of the parched karroo.

Afar in the desert I love to ride,
With the silent Bush-boy alone by my side:
Away, away, in the wilderness vast,
Where the white man's foot hath never passed,
And the quivered Coranna or Bechuan
Hath rarely crossed with his roving clan:
A region of emptiness, howling and drear,
Which man hath abandoned from famine and fear;

Which the snake and the lizard inhabit alone,
With the twilight bat from the yawning stone;
Where grass, nor herb, nor shrub takes root,
Save poisonous thorns that pierce the foot;
And the bitter melon, for food and drink,
Is the pilgrim's fare by the salt lake's brink:
A region of drought, where no river glides,
Nor rippling brook with osiered sides;
Where sedgy pool, nor bubbling fount,
Nor tree, nor cloud, nor misty mount,
Appears to refresh the aching eye;
But the barren earth, and the burning sky,
And the blank horizon, round and round,
Spread, void of living sight or sound.

And here, while the night-winds round me sigh,
And the stars burn bright in the midnight sky,
As I sit apart by the desert stone,
Like Elijah at Horeb's, cave alone,
A still small voice comes through the wild,
Like a father consoling his fretful child,
Which banishes bitterness, wrath, and fear,
Saying, "Man is distant, but God is near!"

Thomas Pringle.

Cape Colony.

THE LION-HUNT.

MOUNT! mount! for the hunting with musket and
spear:

Call our friends to the field, for the lion is near:
Call Arend and Ekhard and Groepe to the spoor;
Call Muller and Coetzer and Lucas Van Vuur.

Ride up Skirly-Cleugh, and blow loudly the bugle:
Call Slinger and Allie and Dikkop and Dugal;
And Gert, with the elephant-gun on his shoulder;
In a perilous pinch none is better or bolder.

In the gorge of the glen lie the bones of my steed,
And the hoofs of a heifer of fatherland's breed;
But mount, my brave friends! if our rifles prove true,
We'll soon make the spoiler his ravages rue.

Ho! the Hottentot boys have discovered his track, —
To his den in the desert we'll follow him back;
But tighten your girths, and look well to your flints,
For heavy and fresh are the villain's foot-prints.

Through the rough rocky kloof, through the gray
shaggy glen,
By the wild-olive brake where the wolf has his den,
By mountain and forest, by fountain and vlei,
We have tracked him at length to the coverts of
Kei.

Mark that black bushy mound where the bloodhounds
are howling;
Hark! that hoarse sullen sound like the deep thunder
growling;
'T is his lair,— 't is his voice! — from your saddles
alight,
For the bold skelm-beast is preparing for fight.

Leave the horses behind, and be still every man;
Let the Mullers and Rennie advance in the van;
Keep fast in a clump; — by the yell of yon hound,
The savage, I guess, will be out with a bound.

He comes! — the tall jungle before him loud crashing,
His mane bristled fiercely, his fiery eyes flashing;
With a roar of disdain he leaps forth in his wrath,
To challenge the foe that dare 'leaguer his path.

He crouches — ay! now we'll have mischief, I dread;
Quick! level your rifles, and aim at his head;
Thrust forward the spears, and unsheath every knife, —
St. George! he's upon us! — Now fire, lads, for life!

He's wounded! — but yet he'll draw blood ere he
falls:

Hia! under his paw see Bezuidenhout sprawls, —
Now Diederik! Christian! right in the brain
Plant each man his bullet: — hurra! he is slain!

Bezuidenhout, — up, man! 't is only a scratch
(You were always a scamp, and have met with your
match,) —

What a glorious lion! — what sinews, what claws!
And seven feet ten from the rump to the jaws.

Come, off with his hide. Why, his head's like a
bull's

(To the wise folks we'll send it who lecture on skulls):
He has shown a good pluck, too, — and, after we dine,
We'll drink to his dirge, boys, a flask of good wine.

Thomas Pringle.

GENADENDAL.

GENADENDAL, or the "Vale of Grace," is the chief Moravian settlement in South Africa.

IN distant Europe oft I've longed to see
This quiet "Vale of Grace"; to list the sound
Of moaning brooks and mellow turtles, round
The patriarch Schmidt's old consecrated tree;
To hear the hymns of solemn melody,
Rising from the sequestered burial-ground;
To see the heathen taught, the lost sheep found,
The blind restored, the long-oppressed set free.
All this I've witnessed now, and pleasantly
Its memory shall in my heart remain;
But closer and yet kinder ties there be,
That bind me to this spot with grateful chain;
For it hath been a Sabbath home to me
Through lingering months of solitude and pain.

Thomas Pringle.

THE ROCK OF ELKS.

DEEP in the forest lies hid a green dell,
Where fresh from the Rock of Elks blue waters
swell;

And fast by that fountain a yellow-wood tree,
Which shelters the spot that is dearest to me.

Down by the streamlet my heifers are grazing;
Prone o'er the clear pool the herd-boy is gazing;
Under the shade my beloved is singing, —
The shade of the tree where her cradle is swinging.

When I come from the hill as the daylight is fading,
Though spent with the chase, and the game for my
lading,

My nerves are new-strung, and my light heart is
swelling,

As I gaze from the Rock of Elks over my dwelling.

Thomas Pringle.

*Cape of Good Hope.*

THE SPIRIT OF THE CAVE.

I SPOKE;—when, rising through the darkened air,
Appalled we saw an hideous phantom glare;
High and enormous o'er the flood he towered,
And thwart our way with sullen aspect lowered.

An earthly paleness o'er his cheeks was spread;
Erect uprose his hairs of withered red;
Writhing to speak, his sable lips disclose,
Sharp and disjointed, his gnashing teeth's blue rows;
His haggard beard flowed quivering on the wind,
Revenge and horror in his mien combined;
His clouded front, by withering lightnings scarred,
The inward anguish of his soul declared;
His red eyes glowing from their dusky caves
Shot livid fires; far echoing o'er the waves
His voice resounded, as the caverned shore
With hollow groan repeats the tempest's roar.
Cold-gliding horrors thrilled each hero's breast;
Our bristling hair and tottering knees confessed
Wild dread; the while, with visage ghastly wan,
His black lips trembling, thus the fiend began:—

“O you, the boldest of the nations, fired
By daring pride, by lust of fame inspired;
Who, scornful of the bowers of sweet repose,
Through these my waves advance your fearless prow,
Regardless of the lengthening watery way,
And all the storms that own my sovereign sway;
Who, mid surrounding rocks and shelves, explore
Where never hero braved my rage before;
Ye sons of Lusitania, who with eyes profane
Have viewed the secrets of my awful reign,
Have passed the bounds which jealous Nature drew
To veil her secret shrine from mortal view:
Hear from my lips what direful woes attend,
And bursting soon shall o'er your race descend!

“With every bounding keel that dares my rage
Eternal war my rocks and storms shall wage;
The next proud fleet, that through my drear domain,
With daring search, shall hoist the streaming vane, —
That gallant navy, by my whirlwinds tossed,
And raging seas, shall perish on my coast;
Then he, who first my secret reign deseried,
A naked corse wide floating o’er the tide
Shall drive. Unless my heart’s full raptures fail,
O Lusus, oft shalt thou thy children wail;
Each year thy shipwrecked sons shalt thou deplore,
Each year thy sheeted masts shall strew my shore.”

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He paused, in act still further to disclose
A long, a dreary prophecy of woes;
When, springing onward, loud my voice resounds,
And midst his rage the threatening shade confounds:
“What art thou, horrid form, that rid’st the air?
By heaven’s eternal light, stern fiend, declare!”
His lips he writhes, his eyes far round he throws,
And from his breast deep, hollow groans arose;
Sternly askance he stood: with wounded pride
And anguish torn, “In me, behold,” he cried,
While dark-red sparkles from his eyeballs rolled,
“In me the Spirit of the Cave behold, —
That rock by you the Cape of Tempests named,
By Neptune’s rage in horrid earthquakes framed,
When Jove’s red bolts o’er Titan’s offspring flamed.
With wide-stretched piles I guard the pathless strand,
And Afric’s southern mound unmoved I stand;
Nor Roman prow, nor daring Tyrian oar,

E'er dashed the white wave foaming to my shore;
Nor Greece nor Carthage ever spread the sail
On these my seas to catch the trading gale;
You, you alone, have dared to plough my main,
And with the human voice disturb my lonesome
 reign."

He spoke, and deep a lengthened sigh he drew,
A doleful sound, and vanished from the view;
The frightened billows gave a rolling swell,
And distant far prolonged the dismal yell;
Faint and more faint the howling echoes die,
And the black cloud dispersing leaves the sky.
High to the angel host, whose guardian care
Had ever round us watched, my hands I rear,
And heaven's dread King implore, — "As o'er our head
The fiend dissolved, an empty shadow, fled;
So may his curses by the winds of heaven
Far o'er the deep, their idle sport, be driven!"

Luis de Camoens. Tr. W. J. Mickle.

Guinea.

THE KING OF CONGO AND HIS HUNDRED WIVES.

FILL up with bright palm-wine, unto the rim fill up
The cloven ostrich-eggshell cup,
And don your shells and cowries, ye sultanas!

O, choose your gayest, gorgeousest array,
As on the brilliant Beiram holiday
That opes the doors of your Zenaunas!

Come! never sit a-trembling on your silk decwaums!
What fear ye? To your feet, ye timid fawns!

See here your zones embossed with gems and amber!
See here the firebright beads of coral for your necks!
In such a festal time each young sultana decks
Herself as for the nuptial-chamber.

Rejoice!—your lord, your king, comes home again!
His enemies lie slaughtered on the desert-plain.

Rejoice!—it cost you tears of blood to sever
From one you loved so well,—but now your griefs
are o'er:

Sing! dance! He leaves his land, his house, no
more,—

Henceforward he is yours forever!

Triumphant he returns: naught seeks he now; his
hand

No more need hurl the javelin: sea and sand and land
Are his, far as the Zaire's blue billows wander;
Henceforth he bids farewell to spear and battle-horse,
And calls you to his couch,—a cold one, for his
corse

Lies on the copper buckler yonder!

Nay, fill not thus the harem with your shrieks!
'Tis he! Behold his cloak, striped, quagga-like, with
bloody streaks!

'Tis he! albeit his eyes lie glazed forever under
Their lids, albeit his blood no more shall dance along
In rapture to the music of the tomtom-gong,
Or headlong war-steed's hoof of thunder!

Yes! the Great Buffalo sleeps! His mightiest victory
was his last.

His warriors howl in vain,—his necromancers gaze
aghast, —

Fetish, nor magic wand, nor amulet of darnel,
Can charm back life to the clay-cold heart and limb.
He sleeps, and you, his women, sleep with him!

You share the dark pomps of his charnel!

Even now the headsman whets his axe to slay you at
the funeral-feast.

Courage! a glorious fate is yours! Through Afric
and the East

Your fame shall be immortal! Kordofán and Yemen
With stories of your lord's exploits and your devoted-
ness shall ring,

And future ages rear skull-obelisks to the King
Of Congo and his Hundred Women!

Ferdinand Freiligrath. Tr. J. C. Mangan.

Kilimandjaro, the Mountain.

KILIMANDJARO.

HAIL to thee, monarch of African mountains,
Remote, inaccessible, silent, and lone, —
Who, from the heart of the tropical fervors,
Liftest to heaven thine alien snows,
Feeding forever the fountains that make thee
Father of Nile and Creator of Egypt!

The years of the world are engraved on thy forehead;
Time's morning blushed red on thy first-fallen snows;
Yet, lost in the wilderness, nameless, unmoted,
Of man un beholden, thou wert not till now.
Knowledge alone is the being of Nature,
Giving a soul to her manifold features,
Lighting through paths of the primitive darkness
The footsteps of Truth and the vision of Song.
Knowledge has borne thee anew to Creation,
And long-baffled Time at thy baptism rejoices.
Take, then, a name, and be filled with existence,
Yea, be exultant in sovereign glory,
While from the hand of the wandering poet
Drops the first garland of song at thy feet.

Floating alone, on the flood of thy making,
Through Afrie's mystery, silence, and fire,
Lo! in my palm, like the Eastern enchanter,
I dip from the waters a magical mirror,

And thou art revealed to my purified vision.
I see thee, supreme in the midst of thy co-mates,
Standing alone 'twixt the earth and the heavens,
Heir of the sunset and herald of morn.
Zone above zone, to thy shoulders of granite,
The climates of earth are displayed as an index,
Giving the scope of the Book of Creation.
There, in the gorges that widen, descending
From cloud and from cold into summer eternal,
Gather the threads of the ice-generated fountains, —
Gather to riotous torrents of crystal,
And, giving each shelvy recess where they dally
The blooms of the North and its evergreen turfage,
Leap to the land of the lion and lotus!
There, in the wondering airs of the Tropics
Shivers the Aspen, still dreaming of cold:
There stretches the Oak, from the loftiest ledges,
His arms to the far-away lands of his brothers,
And the Pine-tree looks down on his rival, the Palm.

Bathed in the tenderest purple of distance,
Tinted and shadowed by pencils of air,
Thy battlements hang o'er the slopes and the forests,
Seats of the gods in the limitless ether,
Looming sublimely aloft and afar.
Above them, like folds of imperial ermine,
Sparkle the snow-fields that furrow thy forehead, —
Desolate realms, inaccessible, silent,
Chasms and caverns where Day is a stranger,
Earners where storeth his treasures the Thunder,
The Lightning his falchion, his arrows the Hail!

Sovereign mountain, thy brothers give welcome :
They, the baptized and the crowned of ages,
Watch-towers of continents, altars of earth,
Welcome thee now to their mighty assembly.
Mont Blanc, in the roar of his mad avalanches,
Hails thy accession ; superb Orizaba,
Belted with beech and ensandalled with palm ;
Chimborazo, the lord of the regions of noonday, —
Mingle their sounds in magnificent chorus
With greeting august from the Pillars of Heaven,
Who, in the urns of the Indian Ganges
Filter the snows of their sacred dominions,
Unmarked with a footprint, unseen but of God.

Lo ! unto each is the seal of his lordship,
Nor questioned the right that his majesty giveth :
Each in his awful supremacy forces
Worship and reverence, wonder and joy.
Absolute all, yet in dignity varied,
None has a claim to the honors of story,
Or the superior splendors of song,
Greater than thou, in thy mystery mantled, —
Thou, the sole monarch of African mountains,
Father of Nile and Creator of Egypt !

Bayard Taylor.

Madagascar, the Island.

MADAGASCAR SONG.

BENEATH the shade of orange-trees,
Where streams with stilly murmurs run,
'T is sweet to breathe the fanning breeze,
And watch the broad descending sun;

While youths and maids, a jocund throng,
With measured tinkling steps appear,
And pour the sweet soul-lulling song,
That melts and lingers on the ear.

How softly wild the maiden's lay
Whose pliant hand the rush-grass weaves !
But sweeter hers who drives away
The reed-birds from the ricen sheaves.

My soul is bathed in song;—the dance
Is sweeter than the maiden's kiss,
As half-receding steps advance
To picture love's enchanting bliss.

Soft fall your voices, breathing kind
The passion ne'er to be withstood,
As raptured gestures slowly wind,
To image pleasure's melting mood.

The gales of evening breathe; the moon
Is glimmering through the leaves above:
Ah! cease, dear maids, the mellow tune,
And give the night to joy and love!

John Leyden.

Soudan.

THE PHŒNIX.

WHEN over Niger's banks is breaking
Another century's morning star,
The new-born Phœnix, first awaking,
Expands his purple pinions far!
He gazes, from the mountain towers
On which his ancient eyry stands,
Towards east and west, o'er cinnamon bowers,
And o'er the desert's arid sands!

He sees the red sirocco wheeling
Its sandy clouds along the waste,
And streams through palmy valleys stealing,
Where the plumed ostrich speeds in haste.
There waves the Moorish flag of battle;
There sound at night the jackal's cries;
There caravans are chased as cattle,
By storms that far beneath him rise!

Southward, he sees the Caffre rangers,
In gathering hordes, for fight arrayed;
Northward, the tents of hostile strangers
Are pitched beneath the fig-tree's shade!
There swords are red, where, far-extending,
Their squadrons combat on the sand,
And France's battle-cries are blending
With those of Abdel Kader's band!

These views the Phœnix, troubled never
With War's wild rage, or Party's sway,
But from his nest, with proud endeavor,
Fans their polluting dust away!
And still, where vales in sunshine brighten,
He gathers spices round his form,
And bids his glorious pinion lighten
Above the thunder and the storm!
Ferdinand Freiligrath. Tr. B. Taylor.

TIMBUCTOO.

I STOOD upon the mountain which o'erlooks
The narrow seas, whose rapid interval
Parts Afric from green Europe, when the sun
Had fallen below the Atlantic, and above
The silent heavens were blenched with faery light,
Uncertain whether faery light or cloud,
Flowing southward, and the chasms of deep, deep blue
Slumbered unfathomable, and the stars
Were flooded over with clear glory and pale.
I gazed upon the sheeny coast beyond,
There where the Giant of old Time infixed
The limits of his prowess, pillars high
Long time erased from earth; even as the Sea
When weary of wild inroad buildeth up
Huge mounds whereby to stay his yeasty waves.
And much I mused on legends quaint and old,
Which whilome won the hearts of all on earth
Toward their brightness, even as flame draws air;

But had their being in the heart of man,
 As air is the life of flame: and thou wert then
 A centred glory-circled memory,
 Divinest Atalantis, whom the waves
 Have buried deep, and thou of later name,
 Imperial Eldorado, roofed with gold:
 Shadows to which, despite all shocks of change,
 All onset of capricious accident,
 Men clung with yearning hope which would not die.

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Then I raised
 My voice and cried, "Wide Afric, doth thy sun
 Lighten, thy hills enfold a city as fair
 As those which starred the night o' the elder world?
 Or is the rumor of thy Timbuctoo
 A dream as frail as those of ancient time?"

A curve of whitening, flashing, ebbing light!
 A rustling of white wings! the bright descent
 Of a young Seraph! and he stood beside me
 There on the ridge, and looked into my face
 With his unutterable, shining orbs,
 So that with hasty motion I did veil
 My vision with both hands, and saw before me
 Such colored spots as dance athwart the eyes
 Of those that gaze upon the noonday sun.
 Girt with a zone of flashing gold beneath
 His breast, and compassed round about his brow
 With triple arch of everchanging bows,
 And circled with the glory of living light
 And alternation of all hues, he stood.

"O child of man, why muse you here alone

Upon the mountain, on the dreams of old
 Which filled the earth with passing loveliness,
 Which flung strange music on the howling winds,
 And odors rapt from remote Paradise?
 Thy sense is clogged with dull mortality;
 Open thine eyes and see."

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Then first within the south methought I saw
 A wilderness of spires, and crystal pile
 Of rampart upon rampart, dome on dome,
 Illimitable range of battlement
 On battlement, and the imperial height
 Of canopy o'ercanopied.

Behind

In diamond light upspring the dazzling peaks
 Of pyramids, as far surpassing earth's
 As heaven than earth is fairer. Each aloft
 Upon his narrowed eminence bore globes
 Of wheeling suns, or stars, or semblances
 Of either, showering circular abyss
 Of radiance. But the glory of the place
 Stood out a pillared front of burnished gold,
 Interminably high, if gold it were
 Or metal more ethereal, and beneath
 Two doors of blinding brilliance, where no gaze
 Might rest, stood open, and the eye could scan,
 Through length of porch and valve and boundless hall,
 Part of a throne of fiery flame, wherefrom
 The snowy skirting of a garment hung,
 And glimpse of multitude of multitudes
 That ministered around it — if I saw

These things distinctly, for my human brain
Staggered beneath the vision, and thick night
Came down upon my eyelids, and I fell.

With ministering hand he raised me up :
Then with a mournful and ineffable smile,
Which but to look on for a moment filled
My eyes with irresistible sweet tears,
In accents of majestic melody,
Like a swollen river's gushings in still night
Mingled with floating music, thus he spake :

“ There is no mightier spirit than I to sway
The heart of man ; and teach him to attain
By shadowing forth the Unattainable ;
And step by step to scale that mighty stair
Whose landing-place is wrapt about with clouds
Of glory of heaven.

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“ I am the spirit,
The permeating life which courseth through
All the intricate and labyrinthine veins
Of the great vine of Fable, which, outspread
With growth of shadowing leaf and clusters rare,
Reacheth to every corner under heaven,
Deep-rooted in the living soil of truth ;
So that men's hopes and fears take refuge in
The fragrance of its complicated glooms,
And cool impeachéd twilights. Child of man,
Seest thou yon river, whose translucent wave,
Forth issuing from the darkness, windeth through
The argent streets o' the city, imaging
The soft inversion of her tremulous domes,

Her gardens frequent with the stately palm,
Her pagods hung with music of sweet bells,
Her obelisks of rangéd chrysolite,
Minarets and towers? Lo! how he passeth by,
And gulfs himself in sands, as not enduring
To carry through the world those waves, which bore
The reflex of my city in their depth.
O city! O latest throne! where I was raised
To be a mystery of loveliness
Unto all eyes, the time is wellnigh come
When I must render up this glorious home
To keen Discovery; soon yon brilliant towers
Shall darken with the waving of her wand;
Darken and shrink and shiver into huts,
Black specks amid a waste of dreary sand,
Low-built, mud-walled, barbarian settlements.
How changed from this fair city!"

Thus far the Spirit:
Then parted heavenward on the wing: and I
Was left alone on Calpe, and the moon
Had fallen from the night, and all was dark!

Alfred Tennyson.

TIMBUCTOO.

BEYOND the clime of Tripoly, and beyond
Bahr Abiad, where the lone peaks, unconform
To other hills, and with rare foliage crowned,
Hold converse with the moon, a city stands
Which yet no mortal guest hath ever found.
Around it stretch away the level sands

Into the silence : pausing in his course,
The ostrich kens it from his subject lands.

Here with faint longings and a subdued force
Once more was sought the ideal aliment

Of man's most subtle being, the prime source
Of all his blessings : here might still be blent

Whate'er of heavenly beauty in form or sound
Illumes the poet's heart with ravishment.

Thou fairy city, which the desert mound
Encompasseth, thou alien from the mass

Of human guilt, I would not wish thee found !
Perchance thou art too pure, and dost surpass

Too far amid the ideas ranged high
In the Eternal Reason's perfectness.

To our deject and most embaséd eye,
To look unharmed on thy integrity,

Symbol of love, and truth, and all that cannot die.
Thy palaces and pleasure-domes to me

Are matter of strange thought : for sure thou art
A splendor in the wild : and aye to thee

Did visible guardians of the earth's great heart
Bring their choice tributes, culled from many a mine

Diamond, and jasper, porphyry, and the art
Of figured chrysolite : nor silver shine

There wanted, nor the mightier power of gold :
So wert thou reared of yore, city divine !

And who are they of blisses manifold,
That dwell within thee ? Spirits of delight.

It may be spirits whose pure thoughts enfold,
In eminence of being, all the light

That interpenetrates this mighty all,

And doth endure in its own beauty's right.

And oh, the vision were majestic
To them, indeed, of column, and of spire,
And hanging garden, and hoar waterfall !
For we, poor prisoners of this earthy mire,
See little ; they the essence and the law
Robing each other in its peculiar tire.

Yet moments have been, when in thought I saw
That city rise upon me from the void,

Populous with men : and fantasy would draw
Such portraiture of life, that I have joyed

In over-measure to behold her work,
Rich with the myriad charms, by evil unalloyed.

Arthur Hallam.

TIMBUCTOO.

MUST I still live in Timbuctoo,
Midst burning and shifting sands,
In a small straw hut, near a foul morass, —
When the earth has sweet green lands ?

No breath of air, no song of a bird,
And scarcely the voice of man,
Save the water-carrier's wailful cry,
As he plods to fill calabash-can.

No fruit, no tree, no herbage, nor soil
Where a plant or root might grow,
Save the desert-shrub full of wounding thorns,
As the lips of the camels know.

The main street steams with the caravans,
Tired oxen and camels kneel down;
Box, package, and bales, are sold or exchanged, —
And the train leaves our silent town.

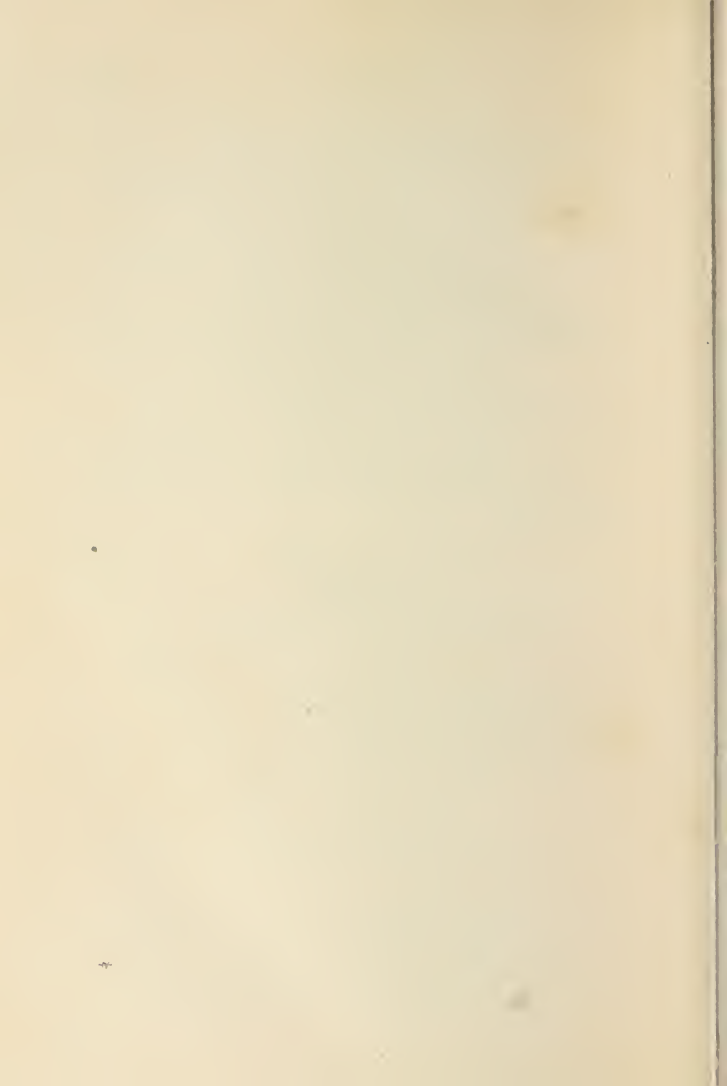
The white man comes, and the white man goes,
But his looks and his words remain;
They show me my heart can put forth green leaves,
And my withering thoughts find rain.

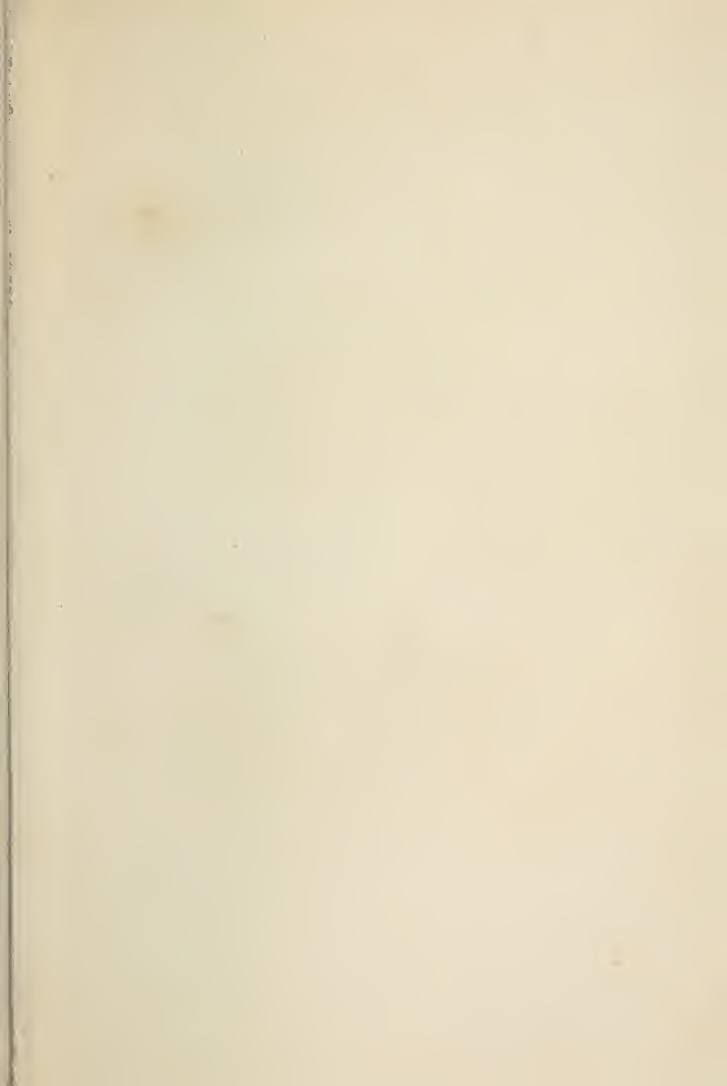
O, why was I born in Timbuctoo? —
For now that I hear the roar
Of distant lands, with large acts in men's hands,
I can rest in my hut no more.

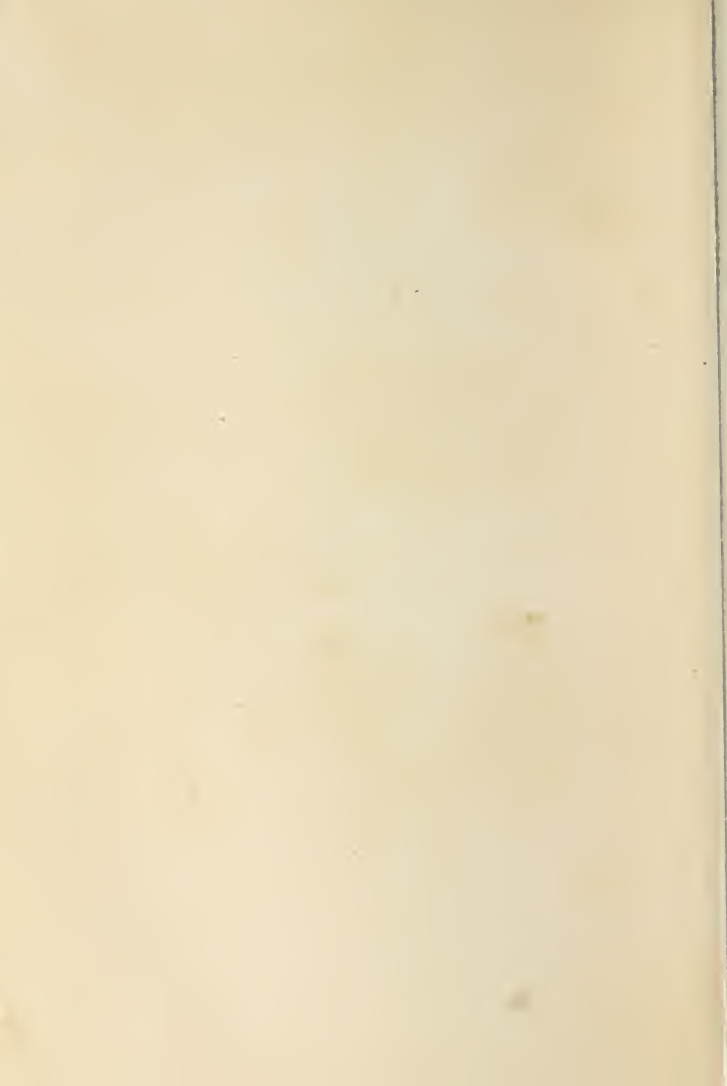
New life! new hope! and change!
Your echoes are in my brain;
Farewell to my thirsty home,
I must traverse the land and main!

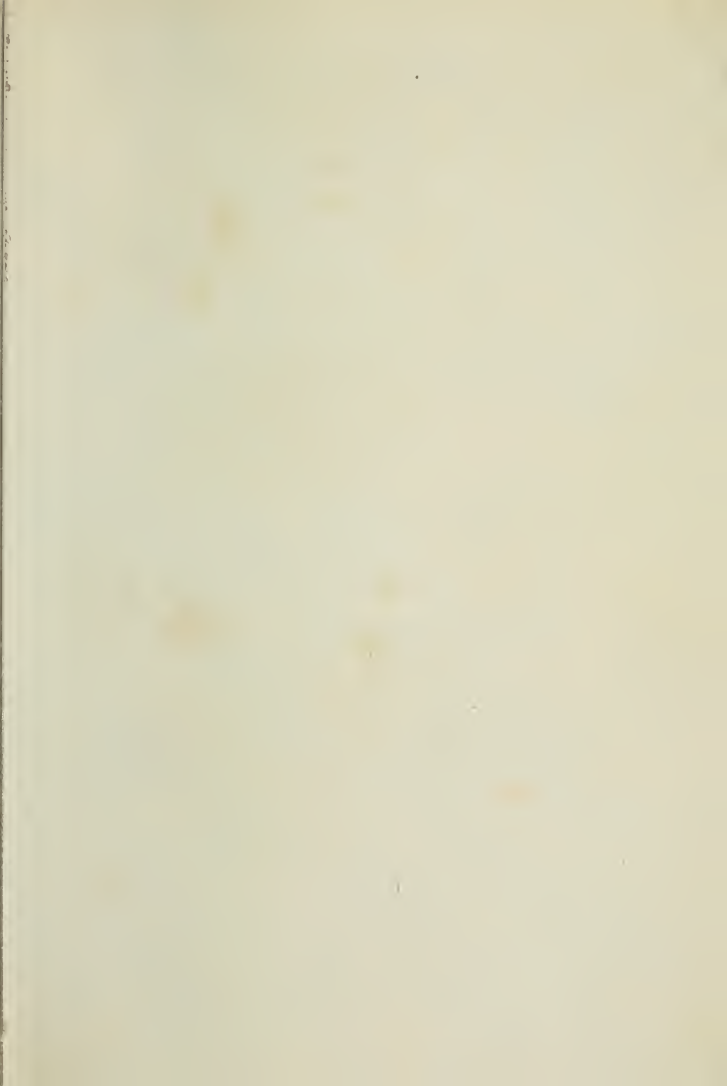
And can I, then, leave thee, poor Timbuctoo,
Where I first beheld the sky?
Where my own loved maid now sleeps in the shade,
Where the bones of my parents lie!

Richard Hengist Horne.









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